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Homeopathy

HOMEOPATHY

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WHAT IS HOMEOPATHY?

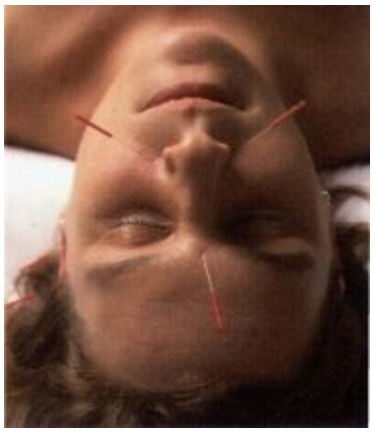
Introduction

Homeopathy is a long-established, safe and gentle system of treating a person to ease illness and promote health and well being.

There is a tidal wave of interest in ways of managing health-care which are not part of the currently dominant, Western system of medicine. People are looking for healing which does not depend so much on chemical drugs. They are increasingly willing to take on more responsibility for their own health and rely less on the sole instructions and opinions of mainstream health-care professionals. There is also vastly improved availability of information about health and illness and every week seems to bring a new scare-story about an illness being related to something we eat, or something in the environment, or concerns about the side effects of drugs.

People feel that there must be a better way – not only to treat illness once established, but also to prevent illness. The streets are full of joggers, the gyms full of exercisers and the health food shops full of people buying supplements, all to achieve healthier bodies and minds. People seem to be seeking balance in their lives, which are too often over-strained and over-stretched, and looking for emotional and spiritual well being.

It is from this background that the rise in use of non-conventional therapies and systems of healing has grown up. The term complementary and alternative medicine, or CAM, is now being used to encompass them all and there are many of them. At most recent count in the USA, over 150 different practices were discovered to be going on. Many users don't tell their doctors about their use of CAM therapies. This has led some to worry about possible interactions between CAM therapies and conventional drugs. Herbal remedies are a special concern in this respect.



Acupuncture is just one of many CAM therapies now integrated into everyday treatment regimes

History Of Homeopathy

For many centuries leading up to the rise of modern, ‘scientific’ medicine, the conventionally acceptable forms of treatment taught in medical schools were often worse than the disease. Ideas about illness and disease were, of course, very much of their time, with treatments we find difficult to understand now. Blood letting, often in vast quantities, was used to try and relieve the body of ‘bad humours’. There was purging with toxic concoctions of plants and great use of poisons, such as arsenic and mercury.

The founder of homeopathy – Dr Samuel Hahnemann (1755– 1843) – was trained in this tradition. He was born in Meissen, Germany, the son of a porcelain painter. Following his medical training, he quickly became disillusioned with the medicine of the time. In fact he gave up practising as a doctor and lived by writing and translating.

It was while translating a book by the renowned Scottish physician William Cullen (1710–1790), that he came upon the idea of homeopathy. Discussing the curative action of cinchona bark (Peruvian bark) in marsh fever (malaria), Cullen claimed that it had its effect by acting as a stimulant to the stomach. Hahnemann knew of several substances which were stimulant in this way, but which did not treat marsh fever, so he took issue with this and decided to try an experiment. In 1796, he himself took doses of cinchona bark and observed what happened to his body. He found that he developed fever, sweats, chills and aches – exactly the symptoms he'd expect as a physician to observe in a case of marsh fever. Putting the observation together with the fact that marsh fever, or malaria, is cured with Peruvian bark, he decided that it was actually effective by mimicking the effects of the illness and in some way causing the body to react in an appropriate way to overcome it, or 'drive it out'. Peruvian bark in fact contains quinine, which is used in conventional medicine to this day to treat malaria.

Hahnemann coined the term 'homeopathy' for this principle, from the Greek words *homoios* (like) and *patheia* (suffering), and eventually expressed this way of healing as a law – *similia similibus curentur*, 'let like be cured by like'. In other words, the healer must discover a substance that causes the symptoms in a healthy person, which are to be helped in the sick person. The body will then be able to react in an appropriate way and regain its healthy equilibrium. Older systems of medicine may have used this principle, but Hahnemann was the first to expand it to a whole system of healing.

He spent several years trying out the effects of many substances on the healthy body, enlisting his friends and family in these experiments, or 'provings'. The

participants took doses of the test substance and noted down all their reactions after taking it, arriving at a ‘drug picture’; a group of symptoms or characteristics which could be expected to be helped by that substance when made into a remedy. Added to this proving process have been reports of the direct toxicity observed in poisonings (accidental and otherwise) and later, records of characteristics observed and symptoms cured by treatment with particular remedies.

He initially used large doses of the substances, but experimented with reducing the dose to try to avoid the unpleasant (and often dangerous) side effects. He discovered that the medicinal power of the substance was actually increased by dilution and the toxic effects neutralized. The critical thing was to do the dilution in stages and strongly shake the mixture between each stage of addition of more diluting water. He named the process ‘potentisation’, as the medicine became seemingly more powerful with each stage of dilution, each stage producing a different homeopathic ‘potency’. The shaking process is termed ‘succussion’ and is the essential process in the preparation of a homeopathic ‘remedy’ from the starting natural substance. This healing activity of very dilute substances is the main source of disbelief of homeopathy amongst mainstream scientists.

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES

- Experimental provings
- Poisonings
- Clinical observation

The practice of homeopathy took root from Hahnemann and his followers and soon spread across Europe and then to much of the rest of the world, crossing the Atlantic to he Americas in 1825. Different societies and cultures adapt and develop the form of medicine most appropriate to their own systems of beliefs and health needs and many different schools of homeopathy have developed throughout the world over the years but all have the ‘law of similars’ as their basis.

Different Types Of Homeopathy

The main division in homeopathic practice over the years, has been between practitioners who feel that the right way to proceed is with a single remedy, often given infrequently and those who adopt an approach using several remedies, each one for a different aspect of the problem, perhaps given much more frequently and sometimes mixed together. The first group, the purists (often now called ‘classical homeopaths’), claiming that they alone follow the true path of Hahnemann, aim to cover as much of the disturbance and symptoms of an individual as possible with a single homeopathic remedy (‘constitutional’ prescribing).

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The other way of prescribing is much more based on simply observable characteristics and disease labels and is the approach generally used in self-prescribing (‘local’ or ‘pathological’ prescribing). In practice, most use a mixture of both methods, with a constitutional prescription often being supplemented with more local remedies. ‘Complex’ prescribing is very popular in continental Europe and involves using proprietary mixtures of several homeopathic remedies for particular indications – up to 20 in some cases!

Comparisons With Other Types Of Medicine

In the West, there is a long tradition of healers not allied to medicine and there have always been systems of healing running in parallel with the dominant medical culture of the day in the Western World. Whole systems of treatment – chiropractic, osteopathy, naturopathy, arose in the USA towards the end of the nineteenth century from 'unqualified' practitioners. For most of the world's population, what is called 'CAM' (complementary and alternative medicine) in the West is simply 'medicine'. Folk and traditional medicine is the first (and often the only) port of call for most people in the world when they fall ill. Billions of people use Traditional Chinese medicine, a path of healing established and built on for at least 2000 years. Traditional spiritual and herbal practices are the mainstay of care in large areas of the world. Sometimes Western ideas are grafted onto more familiar local medicine, with two systems working together in concord.

Homeopathy, at least in the UK, is unique amongst CAM therapies in having been an established part of the NHS and practised by doctors (medical homeopaths), since its inception in 1948. This gives a particular authority to the views of medical homeopaths about ways of integrating CAM into conventional treatment pathways.

COMPARISONS WITH MODERN MEDICINE

In many ways, homeopathy is a modern medicine, in the sense that it is currently used in the NHS of the UK for in- and out-patients and in general practice and so is being used all the time by medical professionals.

Relatively low-tech

- Use of non-conventional drugs, or remedies.
- Nature of these remedies – plant, animal, mineral sources.
- Highly dilute preparations – this is one of the most difficult things for many scientists and others to accept.

Patient-centred

- Emphasis on the consultation – long, like psychiatric, though may be rapid, for example for an acute problem in General Practice.
- Holistic approach – modern medicine can often seem rushed and investigation-oriented and medicine has evolved away from bedside clinical care and into the laboratory and high-tech development.
- Highly individualised to each person's needs and circumstances.
- Research in homeopathy may use different criteria, e.g. patient satisfaction, to assess outcome. In contrast, practice and research in conventional medicine may be primarily driven by the needs of drug companies. It may be difficult for homeopathy to be evidence-based in the conventional sense.

Results may take time and improvement may be in stages

- Aim of treatment is not to suppress illness or hide symptoms, but to improve energy, vitality, mood and boost the body's own healing processes and so approach treatment in a different way.

May be safely administered by self, medical and non-medical practitioners

Few side-effects

- No direct drug side-effects, like anaphylactic shock or severe toxic effects, though there may be some mild adverse effects at first.
- May, in fact, help counter the side-effects of treatment with modern drugs.

However, it is very important to avoid the impression that homeopathy is somehow 'good' and everything else is 'bad'. At the right time, most medical interventions have their place.

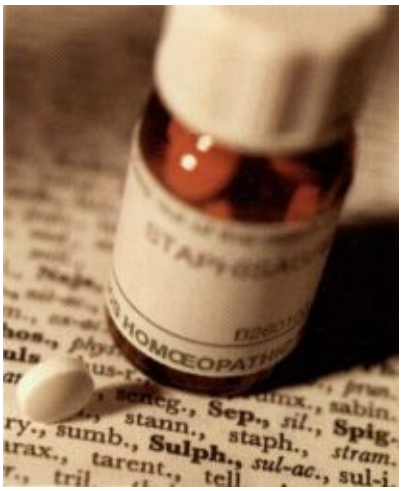
There are many routes to health and healing for any one individual. Homeopathy or another traditional medicine may be the catalyst or provide the impetus for healing. The very seeking of the help itself and the simple encounter with the practitioner, irrespective of any remedy taken, can be transforming.

Occasionally, homeopathy may have a more profound effect when used in conjunction with another therapy. For example, it often mixes well with ‘hands-on’ treatments such as massage, aromatherapy, cranio-sacral therapy and reflexology. However, it is not generally recommended to take too many medicines of whatever kind – conventional or complementary – at one time. For example, it can be difficult to assess the individual effects of homeopathy and herbal treatments when taken together, and therefore more difficult to plan long-term treatment.

Homeopathy can mix well with other therapies like massage or aromatherapy – but be wary of using too many therapies at once.

One form of practice is not exclusive of another, but it can be confusing and expensive to try too many forms of therapy at once. The benefits of homeopathy may be counteracted too by excessive interventions or treatments – it must be allowed the time and the space it needs to be effective.

Homeopathy may have advantages over other forms of complementary therapy. Many of its practitioners are medical doctors and regulated as such and homeopathy is incorporated into the NHS. The remedies used are widely available and relatively cheap and are pleasant to take, often in the form of sweet-tasting granules placed under the tongue (children in particular find them attractive and palatable). They are not messy, have no strong flavour or smell and are non-toxic. And – you don’t have to believe in it for it to be effective!



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Common Questions On Homeopathy

Many people coming to homeopathy for the first time naturally have important questions to ask about this form of medicine. Some of these are dealt with below.

ARE HOMEOPATHS JUST QUACKS?

A quack is a term generally used for someone who sets out to mislead with promises of cure of illness despite having no medical knowledge or other skills.

Although the term ‘quack’ has been applied by some to homeopathic practitioners, there are actually rigorous training procedures which most follow. It is important that the practitioner has an appropriate training and works ethically within the bounds of his or her professional competence.

Any forms of medicine or therapy not in line with practices generally accepted at the time have always been open to the charge of quackery. Critics of homeopathy may say its proponents are at best naïve and self-deceived, or at worst manipulative, greedy and calculatingly exploitative. It is up to the homeopathic and medical organisations which monitor patient care and uphold standards to counter these claims. Above all, it is up to the individual practitioner to demonstrate their skill and use judgement in deploying homeopathy only in appropriate circumstances. For example, there may be

pressure from a public dissatisfied with other forms of medical care or therapy to see in homeopathy a panacea for all ills, which it is not.

CAN HOMEOPATHY CURE EVERYTHING?

Fervent supporters of homeopathy may at times expect too much. Mind and body have limits too, even if the spirit and hope are strong. Homeopathy can optimise healing, but at times other support or intervention may be not only appropriate, but also necessary.

You should ignore claims that homeopathy can cure everything – if only it were true! It is not always the answer for you, although it will usually have something to add. Homeopathy may give people hope and improve energy and vitality, which are very important to well-being.

Sometimes its detractors say it hasn't worked, when in fact nothing would have worked - the patient is too ill, there are overwhelming circumstances and death or infirmity are inevitable.

CAN IT BE DANGEROUS?

Homeopathy can be dangerous in an indirect way: that is, if it is used when something else would be more appropriate and treatment is delayed. However, there are very few known direct risks of using homeopathy.

WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE THAT HOMEOPATHY IS EFFECTIVE?

The most convincing evidence of effectiveness for most people is the improvement in health brought about after using homeopathy in their individual experience, especially on themselves or their family.

Precedents Of Successful Treatments

The main way that homeopaths discuss treatments and new ways of using remedies is the case history – a story of a sick individual who was enabled to regain some part of their health when they took a particular homeopathic treatment. The pages of journals of homeopathy over the last two centuries are full of these stories and reading them is an essential ingredient of learning how to prescribe homeopathy.

Clinical Trials

For those who need more ‘scientific’ proof – for example government funding agencies – different forms of homeopathic treatment have been examined quite extensively in clinical trials over the years. The current standard of proof of efficacy of new treatments in medicine is the randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial.

This means that the treatment is given to a group of patients and the outcome of that treatment is measured in some way after a certain length of time. At the same time, another group are given a ‘placebo’ –a treatment which contains none of the active medicine, but is indistinguishable from the ‘real’ treatment (a sugar pill, if you like). The outcomes are compared between the groups and then it is possible to say what extra effect the active treatment has above that of placebo – whether it ‘works’.

The extra ingredients are that the patients are put into either the active group or the placebo group completely at random and neither the patient nor the person doing the trial know which group an individual is in until the code is broken at the finish – the trial is double-blind. This reduces the possibility of bias in the result – there could, for example, be an unconscious tendency on the part of a homeopathic researcher, to record more positive outcome results in people in an active homeopathy group and less positive ones in a placebo group. Double-blinding gets around this sort of problem.

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This sort of testing is common in any type of medical trial. It provides quite a

stiff test of a treatment, but it is one that homeopathy has passed on numerous occasions, in many different medical conditions. There are complicated ways of pulling together the results of many separate trials to be more sure about a treatment. When this was done, in 1997, with the results of 89 trials of homeopathy in which it was compared with placebo treatment, it was found that homeopathy is definitely more than just a sugar pill. Other people, using different ways of pulling the results together, have found the same result. It is hard now for anyone to argue that homeopathy is ‘just placebo’.

Follow-Ups

Another method of assessing if a treatment is effective is to follow people up for a while after they have received homeopathic treatment and see how they get on. This has the advantage of being a view of what happens in the real world, rather than what happens in the very strictly controlled world of a double-blind trial. At the NHS homeopathic hospitals, about 70% of those treated with homeopathy report an improvement in their health, which is making a worthwhile difference to their quality of life. Large, international studies in primary care (general practice) have produced similar results.

There is plenty of evidence to support the use of homeopathy as an effective form of healthcare. There is increasing evidence that it is very cost-effective too.

PRINCIPLES OF HOMEOPATHY

Assumptions Behind The Practice

TREAT THE PERSON, NOT THE DISEASE

It is impossible to use homeopathy deeply without a corresponding deep understanding of the life of the person you are trying to help. The very method of homeopathy is of itself, necessarily 'holistic'. The person and the detail of their problem as they perceive it, are far more important than a conventional 'disease label', although there are many cases in which a single homeopathic remedy will be helpful in many people with a single disease (e.g. colocynth in infant colic; see p. 174–75).

'LET LIKES BE HEALED BY LIKES' (*SIMILIS SIMILIBUS CURENTUR*)

Any medical prescription or treatment can be called 'homeopathic' if it uses a medicine to heal which can actually cause the symptoms being treated. There are many examples in conventional medicine of this principle being used inadvertently to healing effect. For example, the heart drug digoxin (originally derived from the foxglove – see right) causes, in high doses in healthy people, the very irregularity of the heart which it is so good at treating in the sick when in lower dose.

Harry Smith Horticultural Photographic Collection ©

Homeopathy is the use of this method in a very deliberate fashion, using remedies known to produce in healthy people the symptoms being treated in the sick.

MINIMUM DOSE

This was a later addition to the practice of homeopathy, even though it seems to be the fact for which homeopathy is most renowned nowadays, especially amongst sceptical scientists and doctors.

The principle is that the healing power (biological activity) of a substance, when it is repeatedly diluted, far from being lessened and disappearing when there can't be any material of the original left in the dilution, actually gets stronger. The remedy must be prepared correctly, with shaking ('sucussion') between each new dilution.

This fact was discovered by Hahnemann as he tried to lessen the directly toxic side effects of some of the crude remedies and find out how little he could give, whilst still keeping the healing energy. It allows the use in homeopathy of powerful poisons for healing, like arsenic and mercury, or extract of belladonna, harnessing their healing energy but protecting against direct negative effects on the body.

DIRECTION OF CURE

Later still, after many, many cases of cures with homeopathy had been observed

by many doctors, conclusions were drawn (by Constantine Hering in USA) about how improvements often progress. Hering formulated ‘laws of cure’, which state that in the course of homeopathic treatment, healing occurs from above downwards; from within outwards (from deeper to more superficial organs); from the mental to the physical level (from more important to less important organs); and from most recent to previously occurring symptoms.

For example, in the treatment of someone who is feeling down and depressed because of their asthma and eczema, we might expect there first of all to be a subtle change in mood - a lightening of the depression. Then the asthma will begin to get better, with the skin perhaps temporarily worsening as the imbalance is expelled from the deeper, more important level (lungs) out to a more superficial, less important level (skin). Then the skin will clear, with the face and body improving first and finally the rash disappearing down the arms and legs and off the fingers and toes last. On the way, there may also have been fleeting reminders of past illnesses – that sore shoulder you had five years ago, followed by the acid reflux of ten years past. These symptoms won’t last long and should not recur.

Remedies & Treatments

A wonderful array of over 2000 homeopathic remedies is at the practitioner’s disposal. The names conjure up the natural plant, mineral and animal worlds from which they all derive.

EXAMPLES OF SOME SOURCES OF HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES

Animals

- Asterias Rubens (red starfish)
- Apis Mellifica (whole honey bee)
- Sepia (cuttle fish ink)
- Spiders, like Tarentula Hispania (tarentula spider)
- Snake venoms, like Lachesis Mutus (deadly bush- master snake)

Plants: Seeds

- Nux vomica (Poison nut)
- Staphysagria (Palmated larkspur)
- Ignatia (St. Ignatius bean)

Plants: Roots

- Bryonia (White bryonia)
- Gelsemium (Yellow Jasmine)
- Cimicifuga (Black snake-root)

Plants: Whole Plant

- Aconite (Monkshood)
- Hyoscyamus (Henbane)
- Belladonna (Deadly nightshade)
- Bellis Perennis (Daisy)

Fungi

- Bovista (Puffball)
- Agaricus (Fly agaric)
- Ustilago (Corn smut)

Gelsemium

Harry Smith Horticultural Photographic Collection ©

Elements (including metals)

- Aurum (Gold)
- Stannum (Tin)
- Phosphorus
- Ferrum (Iron)
- Iodum (Iodine)

Mineral Salts

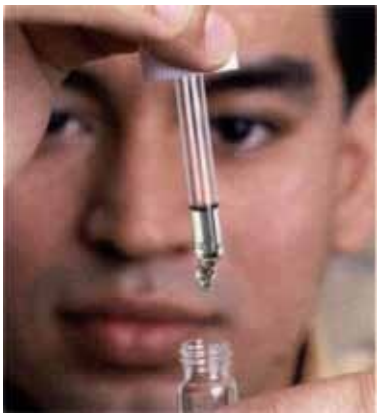
- Natrum Muriaticum (common salt)
- Silica (Flint)
- Baryta Carbonica (Barium carbonate)

The remedies look, smell and taste alike since they are in tiny dilutions. This contrasts with herbal remedies, for example, where the natural substance may be clearly discernable.

How Remedies Are Made

A homeopathic remedy is made by dropping or spraying a homeopathic potency

onto lactose (milk sugar) powders or tablets. Less frequently, the potency itself is used in drop form. Potencies are prepared from the original preparation of the substance being used. This will often be an extraction in alcohol or water of a whole plant or just a part of it, like the sap, root or seeds. This ‘mother tincture’ is then potentised by taking one drop of it and adding it to some pure water which is then powerfully shaken (‘succussed’) to make the first potency. One drop of this is then added to water and the sucussion repeated. This cycle is repeated as often as needed to produce the final potency which is used to make the remedy in the end in whatever form is desired. More solid substances, such as minerals or metals, are ground with lactose for the first three dilutions before being dissolved in water and then treated in the same way.



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Great care is taken with source extraction: for example, leaves are gathered when the plant is in optimal condition. It is important to use a reputable source of remedies, as the way of preparation may well affect how well it works.

The amount of water added at each stage is critical. There are two commonly used proportions in the preparation of remedies: 1 drop of mother tincture to 9 drops of water; and 1 drop to 99 of water. The one : nine ratio gives the ‘X’ or ‘D’ (decimal – 1:10) scale of potency; and the one : 99 gives the ‘C’ (centesimal – 1:100) scale. Each repeated dilution stage uses the same proportions and each remedy may be produced and prescribed in a variety of potencies.

Potencies are described with a combination of the number of dilution/succussion cycles and the potency scale which was used. These names mean that, for example, a 6X potency has been diluted 1 in 10 and succussed six times; a 30C potency has been diluted 1 in 100 and succussed thirty times.

Over-the-Counter versus Prescribed

Purchase over the counter in the UK is usually limited to potencies of 6X, 6C, 12C or 30C. This is because the more highly diluted remedies are ‘more potent’, that is they may have a more intense action. They therefore require greater expertise in their use and so are generally restricted to use by practitioners. Homeopathy is also used in cream or ointment form and in this case, the potency is simply mixed with a base cream.

Remedies are long lasting if stored correctly, away from heat, light, damp and strong smells.

How Does It Work?

No one knows how homeopathy works. Many theories have been put forward as to how the healing power of a substance not only is transmitted through the diluting process of making a homeopathic remedy, but also appears to become more powerful. None have proved to really explain what is going on when a remedy is produced. One attractive idea is that the water carries a ‘memory’ of the substance in the arrangement of its molecules. This has been very hotly contested over the years.

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Whatever the mechanism, results from human and animal clinical trials definitely support the notion that remedies have real activity and healing power over illness. It has been often said by sceptics, that any benefit seen from homeopathy is due to the placebo effect. There have now been enough trials of true homeopathy against placebo to show that this is not the case (see p. 21). There is now a wide body of expert medical support for homeopathy and growing respect from non-homeopaths.

Remedy Pictures

A remedy picture is a descriptive way of visualising a potential treatment, taking into consideration characteristics and symptoms of an individual that may be helped.

In this section are described some of the features of the most often prescribed homeopathic remedies, to provide a taste of some of the characteristics of individuals which are considered important when a practitioner is choosing a remedy. You may find some echoes of yourself in some of the descriptions – the remedies in fact address, in different proportion, factors that are common parts of the human experience of us all. The physical features described in some of the remedies may directly reflect the character of the person or illness, but the relationship between remedy, individual and prescriber is very complex. Sometimes, practitioners wish that people wouldn't read up on their own remedy in detail as it is possible to jump to wrong conclusions. The remedy picture may be unflattering or even seem negative. The language of old texts can seem outdated and judgmental, but are read with combined wisdom and a light, unshadowed mind. The practitioner uses these deeper meanings as a guide to understanding you. *Remember; these are broad-brush, thumbnail sketches only and are not intended for self-diagnosis.*

Useful understanding of remedies can be gained by looking at the original source in its natural environment. For example, people who may benefit from the remedy apis mellifica, derived from the honeybee, show in their behaviour a particular quality of busyness – they will always have some scheme on the go and it actually makes them unwell to be prevented from keeping on with all their activities. Now look at the life of a bee and see how the constant busyness is a strong feature too. There are many examples like this in which the effect on the

human organism of a substance, mirrors the way the substance exists in relation to the natural world. This approach, although of course not sufficient, can considerably enhance knowledge about when a particular remedy might be appropriate.

PULSATILLA *(Wind Flower)*

Remedy Picture

The person requiring this remedy is often soft, gentle and most comfortable leaning emotionally on a stronger partner. They may be changeable or contrary, shy and weep easily. They love cuddles and reassurance from loved ones. Although they are easily influenced, they can be stubborn and even jealous. They are particularly susceptible to sibling rivalry. They tend to be chilly, yet love open air and being well wrapped up outdoors and may sleep with a window open. Rich or fatty foods make them worse.

Other Identifying Features

- they may be blonde, red- cheeked and plump
- children will often sit on their mother's lap during the consultation
- they often will sleep with the arms above the head

Pulsatilla

Harry Smith Horticultural Photographic Collection ©

Clinical Conditions

- problems relating to periods, the menopause and pregnancy
- venous congestion, nasal catarrh (yellow or green), hay fever, conjunctivitis and ear infections

SULPHUR *(The Element, as Flowers of Sulphur)*

Remedy Picture

This remedy picture is an important one – it could mean something to all men or women; that is, it can cover symptoms well, but may not be the most specific for an individual. It is better selected constitutionally. Sulphur is quite likely to provoke an aggravation in, especially skin conditions, so it is important to be cautious in its use. There is a tendency to be hot and much aggravated by heat: for example, sticking hot feet out of bedcovers. They may feel worse with standing, always trying to find something to lean on, or they may be worse with sleep.

Other Identifying Features

- the sensation of burning in different body parts (sulphur is not also known as ‘brimstone’ for nothing)
- body orifices, e.g. lips and nose, may be red and the eyelids red and itchy or crusty
- in appearance there may be some untidiness with a general unkempt air
- often they will be a larger-than-life, extrovert, argumentative character, full of ideas and who loves to build theoretical castles in the air. This may be masking underlying fears
- possibly selfish and preferring to be the centre of attention; they are also friendly and sociable

Generally, they desire sweet foods, spices, butter and other fatty things and most stimulants. They are often restless in bed and there is an energy drop about an hour before lunch.

Clinical Conditions

- almost anything, but has a particular application in problems affecting the gastrointestinal tract or skin – acne, boils, psoriasis, eczema

PHOSPHORUS *(The Element, obtained from Bones)*

Remedy Picture

Friendly, affectionate, artistic, strongly empathic, sensitive to others' suffering and (excessively) to stimuli. They can be very excitable and impressionable with many anxieties and fears such as the dark, diseases, thunderstorms. Rather perceptive and a bit 'fey'. Tend to be chilly, but may have hot hands. Get very hungry and have to eat regularly or they become weak. They particularly crave ice-cream and spicy, tasty foods and are thirsty for cold water. Energy stores can run down very quickly (think of a phosphorus match or an exciting firework) and they lack stamina, but are greatly refreshed by napping (though they don't like to sleep on their left side). They are generally sparky, but can easily overdo it and collapse into becoming indifferent and withdrawn. Although they thrive on company, they are rather inconstant and the attention they offer is only quite short-lived.

Photodisc ©

Other Identifying Features

- tend to look rather Celtic in appearance: fine-featured with long, sensitive fingers, thin and tall. They may be dark with pale skin, or freckled with auburn hair

Clinical Conditions

- tendency to bleed or bruise easily (e.g. nosebleeds, bleeding gums)
- tendency to chest infections (low resistance to infections). Many children respond to this remedy.
- children may be very trusting and open with a vivid imagination, fearful of the dark and want to sleep in parent's bed

CALCAREA CARBONICA *(Calcium Carbonate prepared from the Middle Layer of the Shell of the Oyster)*

Remedy Picture

As a symbol, the oyster can be a vivid way of visualising this remedy. The vulnerable, defenceless inner world and the tough, highly organised protective outer shell. The individual may be sensitive to the opinions of others and have many fears, such as that other people will think them stupid, or of poverty, the dark, robbers, diseases or heights. Generally, these people are hard workers, methodical, reliable and practical in their approach, but may lack initiative and become stubborn and feel threatened by change. The remedy can offer support and courage.

Other Identifying Features

- they may be overweight or put weight on easily
- they often feel chilly and worse in the open air and in cold and damp weather

- there may be slowness of development in children (slow learning to walk, teeth coming in late) and the child may be one who sits and watches, not moving from where she or he is put
- sweating on the head may soak the pillow at night
- there can be a strong liking for sweet food and for eggs and a craving for indigestible things such as chalk
- milk may disagree with them
- there is a tendency to constipation

Clinical Conditions

- widely applicable to many children
- adult may present with anxiety, depression or problems related to obesity such as polycystic ovarian syndrome

SILICA *(Pure Flint)*

Remedy Picture

A grain of sand is tiny, yet complete in itself and can be transformed to delicate, intricate structures of glass (some of which occur naturally in the sea world) or to solid rock. This remedy might be quite timid and yielding, with a lack of self-confidence, though inside there is some ‘grit’. The external appearance and image of things is important and they may be very particular and pre-occupied with trifling matters. They have strong opinions of their own, but will often keep quiet in a discussion so as to avoid an argument.

Other Identifying Features

- tendency to be chilly and feel the cold
- may have particularly sweaty feet, sometimes with an unpleasant odour
- may have recurring infections, such as sore throats, coughs, colds and fungal infections
- the silica child may be small-built, quite delicate and refined, with pale skin and a head that seems a bit too large for them; the hair may be dull and the

nails brittle. They can be obstinate and sensitive to being told off (when they may cry)

Clinical Conditions

- Silica is a critical remedy for promoting healing in long-standing infections which have been slow to resolve; e.g. a long history of many ear infections in a child - one leading to another
- remedy for long-term swollen glands
- can help scars which have been slow to heal
- can even aid the expulsion of splinters

IGNATIA *(Seeds of the St Ignatius Bean - Strycnos Ignatia - which contain Strychnine)*

Remedy Picture

This remedy has suffered from caricature more than any other, classified as it is in old texts as a remedy for hysterical women. This is more a reflection of the medical minds of the time and should not be allowed to diminish the scope and potential power of this remedy which can lend support to an individual at critical life stages, such as loss of a lover or parent from separation or death. The individual may well be highly idealistic and romantic, but become ill through grief, perhaps showing itself as headache. Inner hurts may not be expressed, but internalised and closed down. They may be easily hurt and offended, with stormy, unpredictable relationships. Sighing may be characteristic and there may be a strong desire to travel, feeling better for it.

Photodisc ©

Other Identifying Features

- there may be a fear of birds, including chickens, and there can be a strong aversion to fruit and craving for cheese
- there can be the feeling of a lump stuck in the throat
- complaints may appear rather paradoxical, e.g. swallowing solid food is easier than liquids
- strong aversion to tobacco smoke and coffee may aggravate

Clinical Conditions

- grief states
- spasms such as in lower back, depression, period problems, headache

NATRUM MURIATICUM *(Common Salt - from Rock or; more usually, Sea)*

Remedy Picture

In Western society, a widely used remedy, perhaps related to our personal experiences of pain and how we suppress it. The person requiring this remedy may be very sensitive and vulnerable to hurts. There may be a hard shell preventing intimacy, an invisible wall to self-protect of which the individual may not themselves be aware. They can tend to intellectualise emotions and be very private, closed and reserved about their inner hurts and griefs. They can find it hard to forgive past hurts such as family disagreements, and can bear grudges, sometimes for years. The person may be good listener who is discrete and to whom others tend to confide their worries. It is rarely so the other way round except to a very few friends.

Other Identifying Features

- a tendency to grieve very privately and for a long time, shedding tears only when alone, and feeling ashamed of them
- intensely sympathetic themselves, they can be aggravated or annoyed by others trying to console them
- often serious and very responsible: such children may seem older than their years, or assume too much responsibility
- there is an aggravation at 10am and from sunlight; they will tend to walk in the shade and wear dark glasses
- they may crave salt, sour foods, bread and pasta

Clinical Conditions

- a wide-ranging remedy, but commonly headache, depression, menstrual and menopause problems, cold sores, greasy skin, allergy

STAPHYSAGRIA *(The Seeds of Delphinium Staphysagria, Palmated Larkspur)*

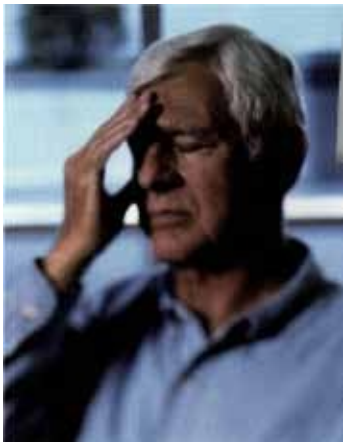
Remedy Picture

The remedy may appear quiet, polite and well- mannered, even rather sweet, but a turmoil of emotions seethes beneath the gentle breast. Confrontation can be difficult as they feel guilty about anger. They do not easily work upset, hurt or anger through their system, but suppress and let things simmer away inside.

Anger may burst out like a pressure cooker, with throwing things wildly (although rarely aimed to hit). There may be a history of being bullied or humiliated at home or work. There can be boiling indignation and resentment, with outbursts from long-suppressed rage.

Other Identifying Features

- anger may present in physical ways such as headache, abdominal pain, irritable bladder or sore joints
- they may become tremulous, voice weak and have general weakness with poor concentration
- there may be a preoccupation with sex



Photodisc ©

- they can be highly sensitive, considerate to others' feelings, finely tuned
- disappointments in romance may lead to pent-down emotions, with old emotional wounds forever intensely paining
- physically there may be great sensitivity to pain and other stimuli such as noise with aggravation from touch

Clinical Conditions

- depression, low self-esteem
- cystitis, especially 'honeymoon cystitis'

- sexual problems; after surgery to heal incised wounds, urethral operations.

LACHESIS *(Venom of the Bushmaster Snake)*

Remedy Picture

People who may be helped by this remedy may be intense and passionate, high-energy and place great emphasis on their sexuality. They can be extremely jealous, selfish and high-handed. They can have highly developed wit and may employ sarcasm, aware of others' faults and showing it. When invective is fully invoked they may be venomous! They tend to be talkative and there may be a great pressure of speech which is difficult to interrupt. Alternatively, they may be introverted or anxious. There may be great suspicion of a partner's fidelity, which can be taken to extremes.

A child may 'blow up' with strong feelings, e.g. if there is a new baby in the family they may be fiercely jealous. A child may be possessive of friends. They may be intolerant and disrespect authority, in adulthood too.

Other Identifying Features

- there may be an aggravation of symptoms such as headache on waking from sleep
- they are warm/hot-blooded, feeling worse in hot weather
- often a woman may have worsening emotional and mood changes before her period, with immediate relief when the menstrual flow starts
- problems may tend to be on the left side of the body
- a strong feature is commonly an aversion to tight collars, necklaces or scarves, preferring the neckline to be open

Clinical Conditions

- may be particularly useful at menopause; period problems
- sore throats, especially left-sided and vascular problems (affecting the circulation and bleeding)

ARGENTUM NITRICUM *(Nitrate of Silver)*

Remedy Picture

This remedy can appear very impulsive and perhaps inappropriately childish or naïve in terms of lacking control (it is not in fact a remedy greatly used in children). Fears can be dominant and lead to deep– seated phobic problems. There may be an impulse to jump from a height; fear looking at a tall building in case it should fall on them; claustrophobia; fears of bridges, hospitals, aeroplanes, of being late. They are usually very warm-blooded and aggravated by heat, hating anywhere stuffy and craving fresh air, but may be chilly.

Other Identifying Features

- anxiety about their own health
- characteristically, they have a lot of loud belching and flatus, passed with relish!
- they get a ‘nervous tummy’ with diarrhoea before an event
- a great craving for sweets and salt, but eating sweets makes them feel worse
- they may experience the heart thumping loudly
- there may be hoarseness of the voice in singers and those who speak professionally.

Photodisc ©

Clinical Conditions

- problems of the throat in singers

- anxiety states and panic attacks
- eye problems
- nerves before driving test or flying
- digestive disorders
- neurological problems

NUX VOMICA *(From the Seeds of the Poison Nut Tree which contains Strychnine)*

Remedy Picture

May have a strong constitution, be very successful, ambitious and hard-working, seeking efficiency and applying himself ruthlessly. Extreme sensitivity to smells, noise and pain: in fact, a general irritability. There is intolerance of others and taking easy offence with angry outbursts. They are chilly, worse in dry or windy weather and bothered by drafts or any airflow under the bed covers in a fever. They are wakeful at night, especially 3–4 am with a buzzing mind going over work issues. They are extremely work-oriented, highly driven and competitive. There may well be a lot of irrational or unresolved anger and there may be colicky spasms throughout the body.

Other Identifying Features

- a passion for order, fastidiousness and tidiness at home and at work
- a taste for coffee and alcohol and a reliance on stimulants
- children may be extremely competitive with classmates and at sport, and critical of their parents

Photodisc ©

Clinical Conditions

- can be very effective in nausea and sickness of pregnancy, hangover or where there have been other excesses, such as indigestion from over-rich food

ARSENICUM ALBUM *(White Arsenic, Arsenic Trioxide)*

Remedy Picture

This remedy may be indicated in those with much underlying insecurity and anxiety, who may be despairing about their illness and the future; e.g. they feel there is little use of medicine since they are convinced they will die anyway. They can be difficult to reassure. They can be extremely neat and tidy in personal appearance and home, sometimes obsessively so. There is a distinctive need for control, and they will go to great lengths to achieve this. Fears include being alone at night and for the safety of those they depend on, particularly for their emotional security.

Photodisc ©

Other Identifying Features

- they are generally chilly and feel worse from the cold
- pains, whatever their site in the body, may feel ‘burning’ yet better for heat, as a characteristic
- restlessness, rarely sitting still, may follow rituals as part of a routine
- problems may recur in a cycle, such as fortnightly
- the person may feel worse at midnight or the early hours of the morning
- there may be a thirst for small sips, taken often and a craving for fat, sour food and alcohol

Clinical Conditions

- anxiety states and depression
- acute diarrhoea and vomiting
- skin diseases
- asthma and other allergic conditions

SEPIA *(Ink of Cuttlefish)*

Remedy Picture

Most often used in women, but not exclusively a female remedy. Those who may benefit from it may be marked by tiredness, worn-down appearance and a dragging-down sensation in their pelvis. They may also display apathy and indifference. They tend to be chilly but can flush easily. A woman may become irritable and need to get away, even from those she loves, her husband and children. They like to be tidy but may become overwhelmed by housework and domestic chores. Generally, they feel better for being active, as in dancing or exercise class, and come alive then.

Other Identifying Features

- in appearance, they may have quite a sallow complexion or brownish pigmentation on the face
- in general, they feel worse around teatime (4–6 pm), when domestic demands may also be at a height
- there can be a strong desire for pickles and tasty, spicy food

Clinical Conditions

- often useful in the menopause, menstrual problems, problems after childbirth including post-natal depression, vaginal prolapse and low-energy states

LYCOPODIUM *(From the Spores of the Club Moss)*

Remedy Picture

The person for whom this remedy may be helpful may feel weak, lacking in confidence and fear they are a fraud (even if in an eminent and responsible position), worrying they may be ‘found out’ as somehow lacking in substance. They may hide this by arrogance and a domineering manner. In particular, they may be an angel at work but unpleasant tyrant at home. They may dread in anticipation, fearing failure especially when tackling a new job or tasks, but perform well once started.

Photodisc ©

Other Identifying Features

- they may have premature greying and a worried, frowning expression and pale face
- they may have difficulty in making commitment in a relationship but they can still be emotionally sensitive, e.g. weeping when they receive a gift from a friend
- they may be rather lacking in self-discipline, such as indulging in sweets
- on a darker note, fears include being alone, but they prefer someone in the next room rather than direct company
- sensitivity to the cold, although headaches are worse in the warm
- the right-side of the body is often affected, or symptoms may change from right to left
- there may be a worsening of symptoms about 4–8 pm
- complaints of a lot of wind with a distended abdomen, and need to loosen belts and clothes to accommodate this
- they may feel extremely hungry yet easily sated and particularly like sweets and hot drinks, getting upsets from cold drinks
- intolerance of peas and beans
- eating regularly to avoid headache

Clinical Conditions

- gastrointestinal and liver problems
- impotence
- stage-fright

THUJA *(The Leaves and Twigs of the Tree Thuja Occidentalis)*

Remedy Picture

This remedy can present an immaculate, pleasing appearance to the world, yet the person feels totally worthless and ‘ugly’, unlovable within, having self-doubts and low self-esteem. The hiding of their inner self can lead to the extreme of secretiveness. There can be depression resulting from this. They may have unusual, fixed ideas, such as that the person is fragile or made of glass and could break.

Photodisc ©

Other Identifying Features

- the person may walk and talk in a rush
- there is a great sensitivity to damp and wet weather; even walking by a stream may make them feel worse
- they also tend to be chilly and worse in the cold
- with food, the person may either love or hate onions
- they may have problems with chronic catarrh

- their skin and perspiration may seem oily

Clinical Conditions

- depression
- warts including genital
- ill-effects of vaccination
- asthma
- sinusitis/catarrhal problems

TARENTULA HISPANA *(Spanish Tarentula Spider)*

Remedy Picture

A remedy not so commonly used as some of the others described here, but it is dramatically the most restless remedy of all - always on the go. There is unpredictable and impulsive behaviour, destructiveness or passionate rages. They do not like to be touched. Children may be wild and disobedient. There is a great love of music (heavy metal included) and dancing, which may excite further or calm. They are incredibly industrious and may find that others move and do things too slowly and be impatient. There is often a high sex drive.

Other Identifying Features

- often quite picky eaters, rarely settling into a good meal
- preference for salty, spicy and raw food and often a distaste for meat
- they tend to be chilly but long for and prefer to be in the open air
- their legs can be restless even in bed and the covers kicked to pieces by morning

Clinical Conditions

- hyperactivity in children

ARNICA *(Arnica Montana, Leopard's Bane; Whole Plant)*

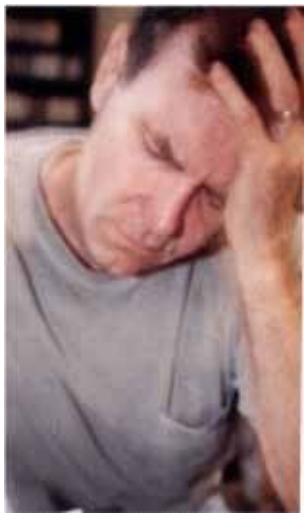
Remedy Picture

Arnica is a great shock remedy and may be the best to try first with self-treatment. It may convince even the sceptic most resistant to the potential within homeopathy! It is, however, important not to use it indiscriminately - it won't work as well or not at all if not chosen wisely.

The person may be suffering from a general dip in health after the physical injury or shock of the trauma, for example they may suddenly be finding it very hard to get to sleep. It may also be used by homeopaths to treat long-standing effects of trauma even if the event, whether stroke, heart-attack or car accident was a long time in the past.

Other Identifying Features

- the person may be irritable and low, or deny anything is the matter
- a particular fear of being touched
- even the bed may feel hard beneath them and they change position constantly, being very restless
- commonly there can be a feeling of having been bruised and beaten all over and there may in fact be a tendency to bruise easily
- the person may have overextended themselves and be exhausted, mentally or physically.



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Clinical Conditions

- injuries where there is bruising, sprains, surgery
- childbirth (labour and delivery)
- dental procedures
- rheumatic problems
- chronic fatigue states
- of particular benefit in the elderly

BELLADONNA *(From the Plant Deadly Nightshade)*

Remedy Picture

This remedy has a valuable place in every homeopathic practitioner's armoury or in the medical kit at home. It has been classically used for feverish illnesses of very sudden onset, where the person goes very red and burns up, with areas almost too hot to touch, and may have dilated, shining pupils. With fever, the person may develop hallucinations. They can become unwell if they get chilled, especially on the head (this may even happen with washing or cutting the hair). There can be great sensitivity to touch and movement.

Belladonna

Harry Smith Horticultural Photographic Collection ©

In this plant's natural state, it contains atropine and has been used as a cosmetic to enlarge the pupils of the eyes ('eyebright') and so add sparkle and allure, although it is potentially very toxic.

Other Identifying Features

- in general, these people can seem very strong, lively and healthy - quite robust in fact – but they can react intensely to illness and perhaps other adverse circumstances
- in children particularly, there can be a tendency to strike out, pull hair or bite
- there can be a strong desire for lemons and lemonade (the old-fashioned kind)
- there can be an enormous fear of dogs

Clinical Conditions

- effects of sunstroke
- earache
- tonsillitis
- fevers
- hyperactivity in children
- some long-term conditions like migraine

KALI CARBONICUM *(Potassium Carbonate)*

Remedy Picture

Individuals may show a tendency to be conservative in their habits, down to earth, rather rigid, correct, straight-laced. Strong sense of duty, control and fear of losing it and adherence to a moral code. They find it difficult to admit to, or express emotion, but they feel emotions such as fear or shock go straight to the stomach like a blow. They also get a sick feeling with excitement. They may be 'squirrels', hoarding things and they find it hard to let go of relationships too.

Other Identifying Features

- physically they may be pale and rather soft-fleshed and they can have swelling of the eyelids
- periods may be very heavy
- they may well feel irritable when attacked or criticised but keep quiet, unable to retaliate
- they can have a vivid imagination and be beset by fears of the future and what it might hold, or of ghosts
- there may be long-term, painful weakness of the back in the elderly or for years after a back operation or childbirth
- they may have to get up at night with back pain
- some regard it as the main remedy for arthritis which is deforming the joints
- pains in general are worse from the cold or pressing or lying on the sore side and most things get worse around 3–4 am
- the person is usually chilly and very intolerant of cold weather and winds, yet may sweat easily on the mildest of effort

Photodisc ©

Clinical Conditions

- asthma
- back pain
- arthritis
- heart problems

- sinusitis

CAUSTICUM *(Preparation by Hahnemann from Potash; virtually Potassium Hydroxide)*

Remedy Picture

Individuals are very sincere, sympathetic and concerned for others. They can be fiercely indignant and angry if others are treated badly. They may also have political ideals which are important and be something of a rebel, and they are prepared to take action to defend their ideals. There may be significant griefs in their own past, sometimes a dependence on alcohol as a result of depression. There can also be a history of abuse. They can weep for others, such as seeing bad news on the television or hearing of a friend's misfortune. Excitement may lead to stammering. On a darker side, there may be an anxious sense of foreboding, anxiety, fear of the dark and even despair of recovery.

Other Identifying Features

- they can feel chilly and worse in cold, dry weather, but actually prefer and feel better in cloudy, rainy conditions
- they may suffer from hoarseness of the voice and feel the need to clear the throat all the time
- they may 'freeze-up' emotionally (becoming closed down), mentally (rigidity of thought) and physically (affected by arthritis or paralysis)

Clinical Conditions

- rheumatic or joint problems
- cystitis or difficulty passing urine after an operation; incontinence
- exhausted and worn-down states
- paralysis (such as in the face or vocal cords)
- warts

CONSULTING A HOMEOPATH

Introduction

REASONS FOR WANTING TO TRY HOMEOPATHIC TREATMENT

- Homeopathy may be a safer alternative to other treatment (e.g. during morning sickness in pregnancy)
- Unacceptable side-effects of conventional drugs (e.g. intolerance of Hormone Replacement Therapy in the menopause)
- In an attempt to wean off usual drugs, such as painkillers, or at least cut their dose
- There may be no effective conventional treatment for the condition
- The problem is multi-faceted (emotional, physical, spiritual) and you want to enlist holistic homeopathic insight to help direct healing

PRACTITIONERS OF HOMEOPATHY

Rather as poetry is more than its words and form, homeopathy is more than the remedy and potency. Homeopathy practised at deepest levels can be very powerful – disease-altering and life-changing. Also acting in more minor conditions, it can provide a gentle nudge to the healing process. One of its attractions is the capacity for enfranchisement and empowerment by self-treatment. There is room in every home for a few major remedies in the first-aid kit with the plasters and aspirin ! To achieve deeper-acting results from homeopathy however, you will need to consult a practitioner versed in its art and

science.

Practitioners of homeopathy, like the people seeking it, come in all shapes and sizes. In fact the range of their expertise and beliefs may seem daunting as you try to choose the best practitioner for you or your family. There is a spectrum of practitioner expertise and beliefs. It is important to go for quality and experience. As with other forms of therapy, whether conventional or complementary, the practitioner's professionalism is paramount and you should expect a high standard of, for example, confidentiality and reliability. Similarly, you should feel your own values and background are respected, even if they differ greatly from those of the practitioner.

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Usually, the practitioner has some strong personal convincing experience of homeopathy – after all, that may well be what guided him or her to this profession initially. You however, don't need to believe in it for it to work for you – sceptics successfully helped are among the most satisfying people to treat !

You may be guided by your instincts to some extent in your choice. There is perhaps something to be said for the view that you find the practitioner you 'need', rather as you will be helped to discover the remedy or remedies most suited to you. It is important though, to have some safeguards. Although homeopathy as a method is not quackery in itself, as with other CAM it is susceptible to exploitation by the unscrupulous or naïve. Therefore it seems wise

to be wary and to look at qualifications and professional regulation as a starting point. Think about how well you like to treat your car and how you value your mechanic's expertise; though perhaps a better comparison is with your hairdresser – a haircut in the right hands and ambiance can be almost equivalent to a therapeutic experience. Once you find the right person for you, there is a lot to be said for the established relationship and not changing unnecessarily – a sense of continuity and shared understanding of working together towards your health can develop. (This is one reason why your GP can be the ideal family homeopath).

STANDARDS IN HOMEOPATHY

There are many medically trained practitioners, including general practitioners in the UK, and also non-medically qualified practitioners ('professional homeopaths'). Other countries have their own regulations. For example, in some European countries only medically trained doctors are permitted to practise homeopathic medicine and each state in the USA has different standards. In Britain, medical practitioners seek to maintain high standards and undergo rigorous training and audit, under guidance of the Faculty of Homeopathy. The Faculty is the organisation of medical professionals (doctors, vets, dentists, nurses, pharmacists and podiatrists) who integrate homeopathy into their daily practice. Most medical professionals using homeopathy are members of the Faculty, which was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1950. All doctors remain members of their medical defence organisations, are answerable to the GMC (General Medical Council) and respect Good Clinical Practice and ethical guidelines. They have a responsibility for demonstrating continuous professional development (CPD; i.e. evolving professionally, keeping up to date and not getting stale) as all doctors have, whatever branch of medicine. The best medicine is art and science. You should expect homeopathy to incorporate the best of modern medicine, as it is an evolving system of treatment, practised by modern- day practitioners in today's society.

REGULATION OF HOMEOPATHY

Similar to most other complementary therapies, homeopathy is not state-regulated in the UK. This means that anyone can call themselves a homeopathic practitioner and there are no requirements of standards – for example, by examination or experience, that they must have achieved.

Ultimately, regulation of Faculty members is by the professional bodies of their conventional profession, such as the GMC or GDC (General Dental Council), with the Faculty overseeing homeopathic standards. Non-medical homeopaths may be members of medical professional groups, for example they are sometimes also nurses or pharmacists. Otherwise they follow the standards of their homeopathic organisation. There are several non-medical homeopathic organisations in the UK, the largest being the Society of Homeopaths.

The logo of the Society of Homeopaths

Society of Homeopaths ©

Choosing A Practitioner

This can seem bewildering. Undoubtedly, the individual practitioner is important in this holistic approach to health and illness. In many ways you will be guided by your own experience and preferences, but you may ask questions like:

- How do I find someone to show me the way?
- Is the person any good?
- Are they the best for me, and how can I know?
- Will I get ripped off?
- How often will I need to see them?

When making your choice, you may need to be flexible. Someone with less homeopathic experience may nonetheless have a lot of other medical experience from a background in say, general practice, which could be relevant and useful in resolving your problems. Also bear in mind that a trainee practitioner should

be under supervision, so you may get two or more professional approaches to your problems – two minds for the price of one! In addition, a fresh approach from a 'junior enthusiast' may be just the right practitioner blend for you. The homeopathic practitioner must ensure that he or she is working within their own limits of competence. If they think you should see someone else, they should tell you.

HOW TO FIND A HOMEOPATH

- personal recommendation
- own GP or a practitioner in the surgery
- referral by GP (e.g. to NHS hospital/clinic, or to private medical homeopath)
- information from register of Faculty of Homeopathy
- information from Society of Homeopaths' register
- Yellow Pages
- other advertisements
- private clinics

Factors To Consider

- Medical practitioner homeopath or professional homeopath?
- Registration, qualifications, training (ask for some verification – check their credentials)
- Private medical insurance recognition (usually necessary for reimbursement under private insurance schemes)
- Cost (be clear to ask from the outset: cost per consultation and what is included e.g. prescription cost may be extra)
- Student or experienced?
- Special skills; e.g. a practitioner with a particular slant on menopause, children, allergy etc.

- Other therapies offered e.g. acupuncture, cranio-sacral therapy.
- Does the practitioner carry full professional insurance and is there a clear complaints procedure? (This should be mandatory.)
- Other factors: e.g. is the practitioner male or female; what is the practitioner's cultural background, if that is important to you. Don't make assumptions though – an experienced practitioner is used to welcoming a wide range of patients and will appreciate you as an individual.

HOMEOPATHS' QUALIFICATIONS, TITLES & WHAT THEY MEAN

Faculty of Homeopathy

LFHOM: LICENTIATE OF FACULTY; PROFESSIONAL GROUP IN BRACKETS E.G. LFHOM (PHARM) This indicates a pass in the Primary Health Care Certificate, a basic qualification which equips the holder to use homeopathy safely in simple or first aid situations. It is not sufficient for independent practice.

MFHOM: MEMBER OF FACULTY A qualification by experience and examination open only to doctors (and vets – Vet MFHom). This indicates a high level of training in medical homeopathy but also means the member continues to receive supervision and take an active interest in attaining and maintaining professional standards.

HOMEOPATHIC SPECIALIST: A doctor who has followed post-MFHom training under supervision for at least three more years and submitted a dissertation. They are entered in the specialist register of the Faculty and are then held to be independent practitioners.

FFHOM: FELLOW OF FACULTY A member who is elected as being experienced and senior in the organisation and who has made a particular contribution to medical homeopathy or the NHS.

DDFHOM: DENTAL DIPLOMA OF THE FACULTY A dental surgeon who has been trained to use homeopathy to a high standard in their particular area of practice.

Qualifications at diploma level have also been introduced for Pharmacists and Nurses.

Professional (Non-Medical) Homeopaths

RSHOM: REGISTER OF THE SOCIETY OF HOMEOPATHS The practitioner has achieved the standards set by the Society and has agreed to follow voluntary professional guidelines.

FSHOM: FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF HOMEOPATHS Elected from the register as an experienced practitioner who has made a particular contribution to the Society. There are several other non-medical organisations which award a wide variety of qualifications.

NHS OR PRIVATE?

NHS homeopathic hospitals and- clinics (see also p. 190-91 for full addresses)

There are NHS homeopathic clinics at the Royal London Homeopathic Hospital, Glasgow Homeopathic Hospital, Bristol Homeopathic Hospital, Tunbridge Wells and Liverpool. Other clinics exist as ‘network clinics’ in areas more distant from the hospitals, but most homeopathic prescribing in Britain is done by GPs trained in homeopathy, a recent estimate running at about one million homeopathic prescriptions each year. Waiting lists for the hospitals may be long,

but it is important nonetheless to exert one's choice and apply. Referral is from your GP. Even those GPs with no training or even belief in homeopathy may be pleased to consider this as an option, especially if there are not many alternatives to treat your condition.

It is (uniquely amongst complementary therapies) a right to see a homeopathic doctor within the NHS, but practically, NHS homeopathy may not be available to all, depending on geographical location and also on the willingness of the local health board to fund it. There may also be something of a wait and it may not be possible to be seen for a prolonged period or very frequently – often follow up is time-limited and the NHS clinics cannot provide a primary health care service, responsive to the detail of family health concerns.

Some private practitioners may be recognised by health-insurance companies and this may be a factor of importance, as the fee can be reimbursed.

Consulting privately, most medically qualified practitioners charge a fee for the first consultation (currently around £60–95 for an hour) and usually less for subsequent follow up (often half an hour). Some practitioners operate a sliding scale of fees, depending on ability to pay, and it may be possible to negotiate. The prescription of remedy may be charged separately and it may be dispensed by the practitioner or through a homeopathic pharmacy. Professional (non-medical) homeopaths have a very similar way of working.

General Practitioners may be trained in homoeopathy and use it during their normal practice and you may be fortunate enough to be on their list! However, it may be possible to consult one privately if a more in-depth approach is required. The advantage of a homeopathically trained GP is their inherent knowledge of your family and other circumstances.

What To Expect In The Consultation

Usually the consultation takes place in quite a standard consulting room. Occasionally you may be asked to fill in a questionnaire to provide background knowledge on your family or habits. This may possibly seem intrusive, as much of the information can be quite personal.

What The Homeopath Wants To Know

The homeopath is interested in all aspects about you, from physical appearance (e.g. hair colour, preferred fabrics and colours, style) to physical characteristics like a tendency to be chilly or over-heat, whether one has a sweaty head or preferences like enjoying outdoors, seaside, animals. Even liking or disliking certain foods can be of interest. There is also importance attached to the specific nature of a symptom. For example, with pain: where it is, time of day when it is at its worst, relieving factors, aggravating factors and as clear a description as possible of how it feels, are very important. Information you might not usually disclose but which is very particular to your individual experience of illness (highly prized by your homeopath as ‘strange, rare and peculiar’ symptoms) may be a vital part of the picture.

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Emotional factors, relationships, energy levels and libido are vital aspects of well-being and barometers of health. You will find that they are held to be very significant in a homeopathic prescription. Life events around the time of onset of an illness are of particular importance in selecting the right homeopathic prescription. The condition may even date from an accident (such as a head injury) or another illness (such as glandular fever). This does not mean the accident or the illness is necessarily the direct cause of the current condition, but it may have had an unbalancing effect on your whole system and a treatment aimed at the starting trouble could be useful.

What The Homeopath Will Do

The practitioner may use a computer or consult books (usually a list of

symptoms called a ‘repertory’, or a list of remedies and their features, called a *‘materia medica’*). Don’t be put off by this – the practitioner is respecting your unique contribution to his/her existing knowledge. Perhaps you will need a ‘common remedy’, or perhaps one very rarely prescribed. Sometimes a remedy is even specially made for the individual. Many practitioners memorise impressive quantities of factual data. Others use memory aids and ways to stimulate creative thought. Take the chance to build up your own knowledge though, each consultation is a learning exercise for the practitioner as well as for you! You can take an active part by asking for the consultation process to be explained.

The consultation will, to some extent, be geared by the practitioner according to their expertise and special interests. Perhaps they have seen other similar conditions, which may explain some questions which seem unusual or perhaps even perceptive to you. However, you are the main focus – the practitioner should respond and allow the consultation to take on your unique characteristics and allow you to tell your own story.

In the end, the homeopath aims to understand you and the way you relate to the world, physically, mentally and emotionally. This picture is as deep and full as possible and allows the prescription of a homeopathic remedy which matches it closely. This kind of prescribing is termed ‘constitutional prescribing’ and a remedy arrived at with this level of understanding is a ‘constitutional remedy’. Other forms of prescribing may be preferred.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER IN A CONSULTATION

- Relax, there is time (usually at least one hour for the first consultation).
- Follow the flow.
- Don’t hold back – all information may be relevant.
- Expect that you may be examined, by a medical practitioner – e.g. blood-pressure check, examination of chest, heart, abdomen – just as in a conventional medical consultation, if this is appropriate.
- Ask questions yourself.

- You may not always receive a remedy – perhaps a problem is resolving, or the practitioner wishes further tests to arrive at a medial diagnosis before treating you (e.g. urine/blood tests to check for diabetes if there is excessive thirst). Sometimes the practitioner may need more time to decide on the remedy.
- The practitioner will discuss follow up arrangements. He or she may want to see you again in the near future, or in several weeks, depending on how quickly they feel you will respond to the remedy. Often, they will have set times when they can be contacted by telephone to discuss any problems with the treatment.

WHY THE CONSULTATION TAKES THIS FORM

Information not relevant in orthodox medicine can be vital in ensuring that an accurate diagnosis and prescription is made; e.g. whether one is particularly sensitive to the cold (chilly) or hot. Hence the importance of disclosing and describing details related to timing and any ‘strange, rare and peculiar’ features or symptoms. Be reassured the practitioner will be interested and also, most importantly, will have a framework unique to his or her experience, which will assist.

The consultation should offer a holistic perspective. All medicine should be practised like this, but a homeopathic medical practitioner takes particular care to empathise with your concerns and assess your health needs and address anxieties. There should be a strong feeling of partnership and empowerment – you should feel that you have a strategy for dealing with a problem should it recur. Similarly with use or otherwise of a remedy – you may both decide treatment should be deferred (e.g. problem resolving or investigations are necessary).

The consultation itself may contribute to your healing – yes, it’s good to talk and have a safe place to express your concerns, but beyond that something rather deeper and vital can take place too. This is recognised by many experts and patients, but is understandably difficult to quantify or test for (although satisfaction is generally high after homeopathic consultations, even if the symptoms take longer to change). The consultation can be an oasis in life – let it help you create space in your life for healing.

When the problem is complex, many layers may need to be broached. This can be uncomfortable and you should feel in charge of how the interview develops. Being ill makes one feel vulnerable and tears can be an important step in loosening rigid control (sometimes this is an attempt to contain or make sense of our infirmity). Expressing emotion may be part of the road to returning health and follow an interview which has touched deep and emotional issues.

What To Expect From The Remedy

People respond at different rates to taking a homeopathic remedy. The speed of response depends on many factors, such as the severity of illness and how long it has been present, the strength of the body's inner force and the potency of the remedy. For example, treatment of a fever in a child with belladonna 6C is often effective within a few minutes, but in a longstanding case of arthritis, some relief of pain and stiffness may come on slowly over several weeks. One common pattern of response to an effective remedy is to have a short-lived worsening of the symptoms – an aggravation – followed by sustained improvement. If you are not warned about this as a possibility before taking the remedy, it can be very worrying. An aggravation will not usually last more than a few days and usually leads onto a good result (although it is not necessary to have an aggravation in order to respond to the remedy!).

Sometimes the response will be quite subtle, with an indefinable sense of well-being arising. There may be significant emotional release and a general improvement in coping mechanisms. The physical symptoms for which you consulted the homeopath can be the last thing to improve.

HOMEOPATHY AND CONVENTIONAL TREATMENTS

Be careful not to stop other medical treatment hastily and without advice (it may be dangerous, e.g. if you are taking blood pressure pills or antidepressants). Work in co-operation with your medical carers. Your GP may be more supportive of your leanings toward homeopathy if you show that you are open to broader issues. Discussion, even if opinions continue to differ, can be fruitful for your family/doctor relationship.

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You may have to be the bridge between your other medical carers and homeopathic practitioners (respecting professional sensitivities!), though proper communication between health care professionals should ideally be assumed. Perhaps your GP will be stimulated to attend a course and learn more themselves. Greater awareness among conventional doctors of the use of homeopathy by their patients and its benefits can only be a good thing.

TAKING A HOMEOPATHIC REMEDY

Self-Treatment

IS IT SAFE OR APPROPRIATE TO SELF-TREAT?

For any illness, rather than just taking a remedy, think of a life-style change – more rest, confiding in a friend, etc. In homeopathy, with so many possible remedies, it may be tempting to think that there is ‘a pill for every ill’ rather than taking a simpler, common-sense approach.

In its simplest use, it is however, safe for all to try with homeopathy; just be aware of the usual precautions. For example, homeopathy has a lot to offer in mild trauma such as minor bumps to the head. You would still need to look out for loss of or variation in consciousness, nausea or extensive bruising developing, and if in doubt, consult your GP or appropriate practitioner. As your experience grows, you may become more confident, but it is probably best to stick to treating yourself and your immediate family.

The aim is to keep it safe and help others to use homeopathy safely.

WHEN IS IT NOT SAFE?

The major safety issue when using homeopathy is that it should not be considered if its use is going to delay more rapid or appropriate treatment. For example, extensive bleeding needs blood transfusion and suturing fast. A remedy at the same time may assist response to shock, but giving it should not slow down the appropriate action. Remember, homeopathy may be in addition to another necessary treatment, such as surgery, blood transfusion or replacement with hormones like thyroid hormone or insulin in diabetics.

Using homeopathy may be more ‘risky’ in experienced hands as more is being attempted and the person is often iller. The potential for provoking an

aggravation has to be considered – it could have a more significant effect in the weak, the elderly or the debilitated. Supportive measures have to be available too.

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WHEN TO CONSIDER TREATING YOURSELF OR YOUR FAMILY

Common-sense first-aid measures are, of course still very important. The remedies can support healing, but not necessarily do everything. Use your own experience. Sometimes symptoms like tiredness or a general deterioration in health are important features of a deeper illness, especially if associated with other symptoms, such as weight loss or mood changes. Sometimes a change in the usual pattern gives cause for concern: e.g. a change in bowel habit or the character of periods. Don’t persist in treating a symptom superficially for too long, as you may mask a deeper problem. Be sure of what you are treating and get full assessment and professional medical advice if necessary.

TAKING HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES: SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Know your own limitations – seek professional help if necessary.
- Start small – minor trauma; simple dental procedures; teething in babies.
- Consider first if you should be treating with homeopathy at all (e.g. rehydration in hang-overs; avoidance of provoking factors).
- Stick to low potency and repeat only if necessary.
- Results may take a little time.
- Don't stop taking your usual medicines except on medical advice (GP or medically trained practitioner).
- If you become unwell after taking homeopathic medication, don't take repeated doses.
- Any questions? Take advice from a homeopathic pharmacist or homeopathic practitioner.

Remember:

- Self-treatment works best with self-limiting condition or minor complaints.

WHAT TO CONSIDER IF THE REMEDIES DO NOTHING FOR YOU

- Should you be treating the condition homeopathically? (i.e. is another therapy or intervention or medical advice needed?)
- Is it the right remedy? (you could try again, or try your second-choice remedy before seeking help)
- Have I taken it the right way? (check the instructions)
- Has the remedy been inactivated? (touching it; taking it with coffee or strong mints, etc.)

The approach may be to try again or to wait longer for a response. In an acute situation, such as a child crying with teething pain, a response is obvious as the child quietens and may sleep. If they get distressed again a few minutes later,

then try soothing initially and then a further dose of remedy.

When you are treating period problems, however, you may need to wait for two or three months to experience much benefit. Usually, the longer-standing a problem, the longer it takes to be helped

Homeopathic Treatment

Many ailments, some serious and complex, are treatable with homeopathic remedies. There is great scope in treating homeopathically in many ways, e.g.

- quick ‘firefighting’ response in injury
- unwrapping layers of illness in the longer-term

Different approaches are appropriate at different times in a person’s life (acute situation vs. deeper healing, recognising and treating psychological distress, too).

The approach and types of conditions treated depend on the homeopathic practitioner’s experience and expertise. Understanding the aims of treatment is very important. For example, a cancer or palliative specialist will not be aiming at cure, but can help alleviate symptoms or side effects.

SOME CONDITIONS SUITABLE FOR TRYING SELF-TREATMENT

- Mild anxiety – when the cause is understandable; e.g. moving house or preexam nerves
- Child teething problems
- Infant colic
- Period aches and pains
- Sprains, soft tissue injuries and other minor injuries
- Shocks – emotional and physical
- Bereavement

- Hay fever
- Colds and ‘flu
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Haemorrhoids
- Cystitis
- Travel sickness
- Menopausal symptoms

Other conditions commonly treatable by homeopathic practitioners include arthritis, migraine, hormonal problems (menopausal or menstrual), polycystic ovaries, depression, chronic fatigue and multiple sclerosis. The list can be very long as homeopathy and its practitioners are versatile!

OTHER QUESTIONS

How should homeopathic remedies be stored?

In a cool, dry place, away from strong scents (such as aromatherapy oils). Stored correctly, they will last for many years.

How should remedies be taken?

Allow the remedy to dissolve on or under the tongue – do not wash it down with a drink. In fact, avoid anything to eat or drink, or brushing the teeth for 30 minutes before and after taking it (if possible). Some practitioners advise staying off coffee altogether when on a course of homeopathic treatment, as it has a reputation for possibly anti- doting the effects of remedies. This is often felt to be impractical, but at least avoid drinking strong coffee close to the time of taking the remedy.

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Could I be allergic to the remedy?

Not unless you are allergic to the lactose pills that the remedy is carried on. If you are genuinely lactose- allergic, it is possible to have remedies made up on a different carrier such as sucrose, but you will need to ask a specialist homeopathic pharmacy.

Can I get adverse reactions or side effects?

There are no direct side effects of homeopathic treatment, in that homeopathy does not cause toxic, unwanted changes in the body. What does sometimes happen is a temporary aggravation of the existing symptoms or a temporary return of old symptoms as a part of the course of healing.

If I'm vegetarian, are there some remedies I should avoid?

Some remedies are made from parts of animals (like Apis, the Honey Bee), or from secretions of animals (like Lachesis, venom of the bushmaster snake). If you feel uncomfortable about this, check the source of a remedy before you take it, with a practitioner or homeopathic pharmacist.

Is homeopathy safe in pregnancy?

There are no reports of any adverse effects in pregnancy of the use of homeopathy and it can be regarded as completely safe. The aim is to take as little as possible and it is wise to avoid more concentrated preparations (low

potencies) of toxic substances, as there may be a theoretical risk.

Is it safe in overdose?

Homeopathic remedies are a medication and like all medication should be kept out of the reach of children. However, there should be no harmful effects of overdose.

CHOICE OF POTENCY & DOSE

People vary in their response to remedies. Basically, as little as possible is best. The potencies most commonly available and those with which you should stay in treating yourself, are the 6C, 12C and 30C potencies (see p. 30–32 for an explanation of potencies).

Your practitioner has a much wider range available, mostly much higher potencies such as 200C, 1M (1000C) or 10M (10 000C), but these should be kept for expert use.

Generally, the guidelines for your own use are as shown in the chart that follows:

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR USE

Potency	How often to take it	How long to take it for
6C	3–4 times daily	3 days to start with, then assess result
12C	Twice daily	3 days to start with, then assess result
30C	1–2 times daily	3 doses only to start with; repeat if there is no effect or if there is relapse after initial improvement

In general, continue taking the lower potencies (6C and 12C) if symptoms persist or are improving and stop if symptoms worsen. For a short-term problem, a week or two of treatment is usually enough. For longer-term conditions, treatment can be continued as long as it is helping.

Remember, one dose of the remedy may last a long time (weeks, even months), so don’t be tempted to repeat it too soon. You may have to experiment a bit to find out what works best for you, related to your individual symptoms.

SELF-TREATMENT

First-Aid Kit

The following suggestions may be helpful in making up your own first-aid kit. You could buy a ready-made kit, or construct your own. Rather like spices, you may have your favourites, but become more adventurous as your homeopathic experience and taste grows; e.g. you may feel like treating travel sickness with tabacum and keep this remedy solely for that purpose. Sticking to a small group of remedies at first will help ensure which are most useful for you. So, make up your own personalised ‘desert island/solo voyage’ kit!

Aconite

- shock, such as an accident or animal bite
- if starting to come down with a cold or ‘flu, at the first sign

Arnica

- trauma of any kind, including surgery and dental procedures
- bruises (tablets and cream)

Belladonna

- sudden onset of fever and flushes
- earache

Cantharis

- burns, scalds, sunburn, cystitis (tablets and lotion for compress)

Chamomilla

- teething

- frantic, angry, crying children who won't be put down (pain or colic)

Colocynth

- painful colic

Euphrasia

- hayfever affecting the eyes (tablets and eyedrops)
- any discomfort or inflammation of the eyes (drops)

Gelsemium

- flu-like, chilly or shivery symptoms

Hypericum

- crush injuries such as a trapped finger

Ledum

- insect stings or bites
- black eye

Nux Vomica

- hang-over
- indigestion from over-indulgence

Pulsatilla

- persistent thick, non-irritating catarrh

Symphytum

- to help heal any bone fracture, along with trauma remedies like arnica and calendula

Urtica Urens

- nettle stings or irritation from plants
- hives (tablets and cream)

REMEMBER!

You don’t have to have all of the symptoms listed below for each remedy to be helpful. Often, it’s just the single unusual feature of symptoms which allows the successful prescription of a particular remedy.

CREAMS & OINTMENTS

Arnica Cream or Ointment

- apply to unbroken skin to reduce the bruised area

Burns Ointment

- for minor burns and scalds

Calendula Cream

- may be soothing in minor burns and scalds
- chapped hands
- after labour to grazes on perineum

Graphites Ointment

- itchy, cracked skin. There may be oozing or bleeding

Hamamelis Cream

- can help relieve the discomfort of haemorrhoids
- useful for the itch and soreness of varicose veins

Hypercal Cream/Tincture

- a mixture of hypericum and calendula, helpful on grazes as the cream or as diluted tincture to wash injured or irritated areas. Also used as a compress.

Petroleum Ointment

- skin hacks, which may be deep and bleeding especially on the finger tips and hands

Rhus Tox Cream

- may help hot, sore, restless joints

Thuja Lotion or Cream

- apply to warts

Urtica Urens Cream

- burns, allergic skin reactions, hives, nettle stings

Burns & Scalds

Of course, all sensible first aid measures should be followed, such as removing the danger and cooling the area with cold running water. Expert help should not be delayed if necessary.

If the injury is slight without blistering, then Urtica Urens by mouth and also as compress soaked in the lotion can aid healing and reduce pain. There is also 'Burns Ointment' for this situation, which may contain Calendula, Echinacea, Hypericum and Urtica Urens.

If blistering is present the remedy to use is Cantharis, also by mouth and as a compress.

For the shock of a burn Causticum 30C in a single dose is helpful. Aconite or Arnica can also be of use.

Headache

REMEMBER!

Seek medical help for persisting symptoms or if headache is unusually

severe, sudden or associated with any symptoms which are not part of previous headache attacks.

This is an extremely common problem and often gives rise to considerable anxiety, especially when it comes on out of the blue in someone who has never had it before (unless the cause is obvious over-indulgence in a dram …).

Homeopathy can help headache, both during an attack and also to cut down how often they happen. All of the major remedies have headaches of one sort or another in their full descriptions, but these are some of the simple differentiating features.

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SYMPTOMS

- The pain comes on very suddenly, reaches its height very quickly and

throbs.

- The face might be flushed and there may be a temperature with the pain.
- The jarring of the head by walking makes the pain worse at every step.
- The mouth may be dry and there is a real thirst, especially for cold drinks.
- Belladonna has been successful in the rare, but extremely severe, pain of cluster headache.

Indicated Remedy

Belladonna

Symptoms

- Vomiting with the head pain is a prominent feature, e.g. as in migraine where the patient is constantly sick, right through the attack.
- Where the pain seems worse after a period of stress, e.g. at the weekends after a hectic week.
- Where bad migraine-like pain is much better for walking around outside.

Indicated Remedy

Iris Versicolor

Symptoms

- The chief characteristic is the wish to remain as still as possible, to the extent that even moving the eyes is very painful.
- Sufferers also find that heavy pressure may help the pain, so press their head firmly into the pillow, especially on the painful side.

Indicated Remedy

Bryonia

Symptoms

- Pain is characteristically felt on the right and starts at the back of the head, spreading forward over the side towards the right temple and eye.
- Begins in the morning, perhaps waking from sleep, and gets gradually worse through the day, only to die down again towards evening.

Indicated Remedy

Sanguinaria

Symptoms

- Similar in its symptoms to the Sanguinaria headache (above) but is

usually left-sided and the pain has more of a shooting, neuralgic quality.

Indicated Remedy

Spigelia

Symptoms

- The head suddenly feels as if there has been an explosion inside, with bursting pain all over.
- The face is red and hot.
- This remedy is particularly helpful if the symptoms began from having too much sun.

Indicated Remedy

Glonoine

Symptoms

- Classic ‘hangover’ symptoms, with chilliness, nausea, boring head pain and paleness of the face.

Indicated Remedy

Nux Vomica

Eyes

Homeopathy can help with many of the more straightforward problems in the eyes, including some which are hard to otherwise treat. For more deep-seated conditions, like cataract and glaucoma, conventional treatment is really the only option. It is important to see your general practitioner if uncertain, for a diagnosis and advice.

INFLAMED OR IRRITATED EYES

Symptoms

- Stinging discomfort of the eye, or a feeling as if there is sand in the eye.
- Eyes water a lot and with inflammation, discharge can irritate skin under the eye.

Indicated Remedy

Euphrasia

Euphrasia is also available in eye-drop form which can soothe any irritating eye inflammation.

Symptoms

- A honey-like discharge or cracks on the eyelids, especially if there are more generalised skin problems like eczema.
- Eyes are often very sensitive to light.

Indicated Remedy

Graphites

- Chronic inflammation of the eyelids and recurrence of cysts in the lids.
- Can’t look at a bright light or read by artificial light.

Indicated Remedy

Natrum Muriaticum

Symptoms

- Useful for the sore, itchy eyes of childhood infections like measles.

Indicated Remedy

Pulsatilla

SYMPTOMS

- Eyes are red and feel burning, hot and itchy.
- Eyelids are similarly uncomfortable and inflamed.
- Heat makes things worse.
- Patients can’t bear to have the eyes washed.
- There may be dryness of the eyes indoors, but excessive watering in the open air.

INDICATED REMEDY

Sulphur

STYES

There is a tendency to form styes in the full pictures of many of the remedies. Best results will be if there are other major features of the remedy, but the following are likely to be most useful.

Symptoms

- There is itching of the edge of the eyelids especially in the cold.
- Cysts or other nodules may be present.
- The styes stay as hard nodules, instead of bursting and disappearing.

Indicated Remedy

Staphysagria

Useful for recurrent styes.

Symptoms

- Eyes are irritated and can’t be properly shut because of soreness of the lids from styes and cysts.
- These styes do go away eventually after discharging, but come back again.
- The eyelids may be stuck together in the morning after sleep.

INDICATED REMEDY

Silica

SYMPTOMS

- Softer, flatter styes; perhaps moist or sticky.
- Burning or stinging of the edges of the eyelids.

INDICATED REMEDY

Thuja

Respiratory System

SINUSITIS & CATARRH

Inflammation or infection of the air spaces in the bones of the face (which lighten the structure and give resonance to the voice) can be incredibly painful. Standard treatment involves antibiotics (often repeatedly) and de-congestants or steroid inhalers. Sometimes, the treatment is not effective, or becomes less effective with repeated attacks, and it is here that homeopathy can help. For long-term sinusitis, consultation with a homeopathic practitioner is likely to be the most beneficial approach, but there are some remedies which can assist in particular situations.

SYMPTOMS

- Pain at the root of the nose, spreading to either side, or pain in spots (can cover it with a pointing finger).
- Sticky, stringy, white or yellow catarrh may be present, or there may be just the pain with no discharge, as the mucus is very difficult to shift.
- Sufferers feel better in open air and eating hot food, and worse for bending forward and for moving.

Indicated Remedy

Kali Bich

Symptoms

- There is a lot of thin, watery discharge for a day or two, then the nose stops up and becomes hard to breathe through.
- There is a lot of sneezing and senses of smell and taste may be lost.
- The inside of the nose may feel sore.

Indicated Remedy

Natrum Muriaticum

Symptoms

- Every little cold ends up as sinusitis and it is especially likely in the sinuses of the forehead, so the pain and tenderness is often there.
- The tongue may be coated, there can be a metallic taste in the mouth and the breath smells bad.
- Catarrh is thin, green and flows easily.
- Symptoms are usually worse at night.

Indicated Remedy

Mercurius Vivus

Symptoms

- The condition lasts for months after every cold.
- Catarrh is thick and often goes down the throat.
- Sufferers are often very chilly and much worse from cold.

Indicated Remedy

Silica

Silica is a major remedy for long-term sinusitis that just will not go away, whatever treatment has been tried.

Symptoms

- Catarrh is thick, stringy and yellow and is hard to clear.
- There may be a headache over the eyes, with a full feeling in the forehead.
- More is produced on going out of doors and the sufferer will tend to be blowing the nose all the time.

Indicated Remedy

Hydrastis

Particularly useful for catarrh running down from the back of the nose to the throat (post-nasal drip).

Symptoms

- The main symptom is that fresh air makes everything a lot better, but stuffiness or heat are almost unbearable.
- Catarrh is yellow or green, but not especially thick.
- There may be a headache in the forehead.

Indicated Remedy

Pulsatilla

SORE THROAT

Homeopathy can be quite effective at helping with sore throats. Most are due to a wide variety of viruses and there is no treatment conventionally except pain relief. Antibiotics are often given, but only in the less common situation of bacterial infection will they have any effect. Some bacterial throat infections, though, are potentially very dangerous and can lead to damage to the heart or kidneys if untreated. It is therefore important to follow medical instructions in this case, including use of antibiotics if absolutely necessary. Factors to take account of in giving homeopathy include the side of soreness (or the side where it began), the appearance of the back of the throat and aggravating or relieving factors, especially heat or cold.

Symptoms

- The most commonly used remedy for a burning sore throat coming on suddenly, especially right-sided.
- The throat looks fiery red and the tongue may be red too.
- The face is flushed and dry, though covered parts can be sweaty.
- There may be high fever and even hallucinations.
- The slightest touch on the throat is painful, as is any swallowing.

Indicated Remedy

Belladonna

Symptoms

- Tonsils may have white patches (pus) or even be ulcerated.
- Pain is severe, like sharp splinters, especially with breathing cold air or swallowing cold food or drinks.
- Pain may be felt up in the ears as well.
- Only warmth and warm drinks bring some relief, so sufferers wrap up well.

Indicated Remedy

Hepar Sulph

Useful remedy for advanced inflammation.

Symptoms

- Pain is initially left-sided (it may later move to the right).
- Pain lessens on taking cold drinks.
- It is worse for touching the throat or for tight things around the throat.
- Strangely, it is easier to swallow solids than liquids.

Indicated Remedy

Lachesis

Symptoms

- Pain is initially right-sided.
- The pain is better for warm drinks and often worse between 4 & 8 pm.

Indicated Remedy

Lycopodium

Symptoms

- The throat here looks rather ‘dirty’, with redness and pus.
- The tongue may be swollen, showing the imprint of the teeth at its edges.
- The breath smells bad and there may be a metallic taste in the mouth.
- Generally, symptoms are worse at night, with night sweats.
- The pillow may be soaked by morning because of the excess saliva produced.

Indicated Remedy

Merc Sol

Symptoms

- Especially useful for children with recurrent tonsillitis, who have very large tonsils that nearly meet in the middle.
- There may be enlarged, hard lymph glands in the neck.
- The adenoids may be big too, meaning that some hearing may be lost.

Indicated Remedy

Baryta Carbonica

Symptoms

- Constant, burning pain, extending to the root of the tongue.
- The throat is inflamed with a dark red or purple appearance.
- It is impossible to swallow a hot drink, and cold things relieve generally.

Indicated Remedy

Phytolacca

INFLUENZA

The debility and unpleasant symptoms of ’flu are well known to most people. The usual advice is to go to bed with aspirin and take plenty of fluids while you just get through it. For older people and those with long-term chest problems, it can be a deadly infection. Homeopathy can help reduce the time to recovery; choose from these remedies, which should cover most cases.

Symptoms

- Weakness and trembling of the limbs.
- The fever and other symptoms creep on gradually over a few days.
- Often there is a dull headache in the forehead, which improves on sitting up.
- Sufferers are thirstless, but passing a lot of urine helps the headache.

Indicated Remedy

Gelsemium

The most frequently used ‘flu treatment.

Symptoms

- High fever and deep aches, right in the bones, as if they were broken.
- The sufferer may hardly dare move because of the pain.
- Despite shivers and a great feeling of chilliness, the sufferer is thirsty and wants to drink and eat cold things.

Indicated Remedy

Eupatorium

Symptoms

- Restlessness is the key symptom.
- Pains in the bones with fever; these are made worse by staying still and better by gentle movement; sufferers move constantly to try to get comfortable.
- Sufferers stop moving when they tire.
- They feel very chilly and are better for a hot bath.

Indicated Remedy

Rhus Tox

Symptoms

- Very unwell with a high fever and extreme chilliness.
- Sufferers feel beaten and bruised all over and the bed feels too hard, so there is marked restlessness – they can't lie still.
- There may be palpitations and a bursting headache.

Indicated Remedy

Pyrogen

Symptoms

- Illness comes on quickly, over a day.
- Sufferers are irritable and sensitive to everything: light, sounds, smells, touch.
- Every movement, even that of the sufferer in bed, causes a shiver.
- Sleeping is very hard, as their mind whirls with all their work concerns.

Indicated Remedy

Nux Vomica

The ‘chilliest’ ‘flu remedy of all.

Allergy

Allergy is becoming increasingly common in the Western world and there is understandably a great urge to find alternatives in treatment and prevention. Side effects of corticosteroids which, as well as usefully treating soreness and inflammation, can also sensitise the skin and have effects on many body systems – principally by suppressing the immune system – can give cause for concern. One important aim of homeopathic treatment is to help reduce the use of steroids, perhaps reserving their effective use for occasional flare-ups when a

few applications only may be required. Hay fever, asthma and eczema may all be present in the same person and cause problems at different times. Where clear provoking factors or allergens are known, either by experience or identified by allergy tests, it may be possible to take preparations made from the allergens such as house dust mite, mixed grass pollens, cat fur, dog hair, horse hair, etc. This is called isopathy. Although you can try it for yourself, its use may require advice such as from your homeopathic pharmacist in the first instance, and a homeopath may use this approach together with other constitutionally-based prescribing for best effect.

HOMEOPATHY IN SEVERE ALLERGY

Some people suffer at the extreme end of the allergy spectrum and are at risk of life-threatening anaphylaxis (when the throat and airways swell as a result of contact with the provoking agent, such as a wasp sting or peanuts).This is a medical emergency and requires prompt and expert medical intervention. The treatment of such individuals with homeopathy is specialised and may have to be done as an inpatient and in collaboration with other medical specialties. It should not be attempted by the inexperienced.

Typical allergen sources

HAY FEVER/ALLERGIC RHINITIS

(These remedies may also help in treating common cold symptoms if these are particularly bothersome.)

SYMPTOMS

- Eyes and nose stream, with very irritating nasal discharge.
- The sufferer feels better in the open air.
- They may feel hot and thirsty.
- The eyes are usually not irritated.

INDICATED REMEDY

Allium Cepa

Symptoms

- The eyes feel extremely irritated, burning/smarting.
- Both light and warmth may aggravate the symptom.
- The nose may not be involved.
- Euphrasia eyedrops may be soothing.

Indicated Remedy

Euphrasia

Symptoms

- Watery eyes are irritating.
- The sufferer can feel worse in the warmth and with sneezing.
- They may tend to be chilly, tidy and very particular about things.

Indicated Remedy

Arsenicum Album

Symptoms

- The patient tends to feel chilly, irritable and achey, and better for warm drinks.
- They may feel better in the open air.
- There is often a long-standing nasal discharge.
- They may be hypersensitive to smells and perfume.

Indicated Remedy

Nux Vomica

Symptoms

- The nose may ‘run like a tap’.
- There may be cold sores associated with the condition.
- There is often lots of violent sneezing.
- Lips may be dry and cracked.
- Patients tend to prefer solitude and be aggravated by consolation.

Indicated Remedy

Natrum Muriaticum

Symptoms

- The patient usually sneezes a lot.
- The nose feels itchy and tickling.
- Either nostril may feel stuffed up.
- There may be an aggravation from the scent of flowers.

Indicated Remedy

Sabadilla

Symptoms

- This is characterised by extremely itchy eyelids and streaming eyes.
- The nose and head can feel stuffy.

INDICATED REMEDY

Ambrosia

Joint Problems & Arthritis

Homeopathy is helpful in all sorts of rheumatic/achey pains of joints and muscles. It cannot reverse the physical changes in joints affected by long-term arthritis, such as that in rheumatoid or osteo-arthritis, but it can go a long way towards helping the pain and stiffness which are the main features of these sorts of conditions.

The character of the pain, the appearance of the joints (swelling, deformity, colour), whether they are hot or cold and any aggravating or relieving factors are the main things of which to take account.

SYMPTOMS

- The sufferer is generally a restless person who can’t by nature sit still.

- Joints are suddenly swollen, hot, red and stinging, but any swollen joint can benefit.
- Worse with heat and better for cold.

Indicated Remedy

Apis

Symptoms

- Any sudden, hot, dry, red inflammation is liable to respond to belladonna.

Indicated Remedy

Belladonna

Symptoms

- Symptoms are very much worse with movement.
- Even the slightest change in position of a joint causes misery.
- Staying quite still relieves and is most comfortable.
- Firm pressure on the joint also helps; sufferers may sleep on the sore part.

Indicated Remedy

Bryonia

Symptoms

- Reduction in joint flexibility, and sometimes paralysis.
- Pains are better in warm, damp weather, although cold makes things worse.

Indicated Remedy

Causticum

Helpful where the joints have become deformed, with contraction of the tendons.

Symptoms

- People who may be helped can often tell that it is going to rain soon by the feeling in the joints.
- They are especially bad in the autumn.

Indicated Remedy

Dulcamara

This is one of the most damp-sensitive of remedies.

Symptoms

- Pain in the joints which is much better for cold applications and worse for the warmth of the bed at night.
- Symptoms may start in the feet and work up the body, so sufferers often walk barefoot on a freezing floor, or put their feet in cold water for some relief.

Indicated Remedy

Ledum

Symptoms

- Works best when the person is restless and unable to find a comfortable position to sleep in at night.
- Sufferers wake stiff and sore, taking a while to limber up with gentle movement, which they really feel they must continue.
- They stiffen up with even a very short rest, so that its often difficult to get up from a chair, but if they overdo the activity in a day, the symptoms come back strongly. Hence, things are often bad by evening again.
- Cold and damp weather definitely aggravate the symptoms.

Indicated Remedy

Rhus Toxicodendron

Possibly the most frequently used remedy for joint problems.

Skin Problems

Homeopathy has a lot to offer in a wide variety of skin problems, such as eczema, dermatitis and psoriasis, which are often difficult to treat conventionally. A particular concern for many is the need to use steroid creams which can have side effects. Homeopathy can help reduce steroid usage. Some

remedies are helpful in general situations and others may help with specific diagnoses. Homeopathy is particularly adaptable to skin conditions since it considers many factors in addition to the actual appearance of the skin. It is important to remember there is the possibility of causing an initial aggravation with homeopathy and not to keep repeating the remedy if this occurs. If the problem is very long-standing or severe, you may need professional advice. Usually the remedy is taken by mouth but creams or ointments, such as calendula to soothe or graphites (see p. 129–30), may be useful.

GENERAL REMEDIES

Symptoms

- The main factors to look out for are redness and burning.
- Any eruption that is bright red, hot or feels burning, such as septic spots or boils may be helped, though it has a role in most kinds of skin eruptions.
- Itching is strong and worse at night, aggravated by the heat of the bed, so that people will throw the covers off to cool down.
- It is made worse by scratching, though may be scratched until it bleeds.

Indicated Remedy

Sulphur

Sulphur is a first thought for many skin conditions. It is useful if a lot of treatments have been used on the skin over the years. Be wary though, as this remedy is particularly prone to causing aggravations.

Symptoms

- Oozing (exudation) from dry skin that is yellow and sticky, rather like honey and drying into crusts.
- The ears and hands are particularly affected with cracks and there may be cracks around the eyes and mouth.
- The nails can be thickened.
- It can help resolve old scars.
- Rather a chilly remedy, though the itch is relieved by cool things.

Indicated Remedy

Graphites

Symptoms

- Here, the picture is very like long-standing eczema.
- There are deep, painful cracks in the skin, notably on palms or fingertips.
- Blood, or thin, watery fluid oozes from the cracks.
- Skin is very dry, rough and thickened; the discomfort and itch are worsened by cold air and better for warmth.

Indicated Remedy

Petroleum

Symptoms

- Really marked itching.
- The itch is worse for warmth and at night in bed and although it feels as if you have to scratch, scratching just moves the itch somewhere else.

Indicated Remedy

Mezereum

Helps the distressing symptom of severe itch without anything to see on the skin. May also help sufferers who have become depressed from their skin symptoms.

Symptoms

- There is great chilliness and the skin appears dirty, rough, dry and cracked all over the body or on any part of it.
- The itch is almost intolerable and there is easy bleeding of any eruption.
- Any discharges smell very bad, but strangely, washing makes things worse.
- The skin heals very poorly and the sufferer can be thin, wizened, hopeless

and depressed.

- Everything feels worse in the cold: for example, it can be helpful when eruptions disappear in the summer, only for them to come back again in the winter.

Indicated Remedy

Psorinum

ACNE

In addition to some of the above remedies, there are some specifically useful for this condition, which is usually a temporary affliction in the teenage years, but can be absolutely devastating.

Symptoms

- This is the classic remedy for abscesses which are very slow to resolve and continue to discharge thick, yellow pus.
- Such swellings with discharge, often mixed with blood, are typical of acne.
- There is burning and itching, often better with warm applications.

Indicated Remedy

Calcarea Sulphurica

Symptoms

- Skin is generally unhealthy; spots are inflamed, red, sensitive and tender.
- They are often chilly people and everything is worse for cold, so that a hot pack is soothing.

Indicated Remedy

Hepar Sulph

SYMPTOMS

- This is helpful in hot people who have quite extensive acne on the face and shoulders.
- It is not especially painful, but it is itchy.
- It tends to be worse in the heat and summer and may well be useful if things get appreciably worse each month just before the menstrual period comes on.

INDICATED REMEDY

Kali Bromatum

SHINGLES & COLD SORES

These are blistering diseases due to viruses. Shingles only arises if you have had chickenpox in the past. The virus lies dormant after the infection and only comes out again, along nerves when immunity is low to give the horrible, painful rash, such as when another infection is present, with emotional stress or just as you get older. The nerves affected vary and so the rash may be in different places, the commonest being around the chest like a belt or in the face. Rarely, even after the rash has healed, a burning pain remains which can be very distressing and hard to treat conventionally.

The cold-sore virus also lies in wait for a chance to come out along nerves and

give the characteristic painful, tingly blisters, usually beside the mouth, which scab over and heal after a week or so.

Symptoms

- The main symptoms are burning and restlessness in a generally chilly person.
- Characteristically and paradoxically, the burning pain is better for heat.

Indicated Remedy

Arsenicum Album

Symptoms

- The major remedy for stinging, neuralgic pains in the chest wall, which are severe enough to make the sufferer weep and disturb sleep.
- It is especially useful in chest shingles, or for the pain remaining after shingles.
- Blisters are bluish, ooze a clear fluid and are intensely itchy.

Indicated Remedy

Ranunculus Bulbosus

Symptoms

- There is restlessness with burning and itching, with the feeling that you must scratch the blisters.
- The pain is like being pricked with hot needles and is worse for cold, fresh air.
- Should be taken frequently at first – every hour or so for a few hours.

Indicated Remedy

Rhus Toxicodendron

The first remedy to try with cold sores.

Symptoms

- The rash is very itchy and sufferers feel a great desire to scratch.
- The itching is worse for warmth.

Indicated Remedy

Mezereum

WARTS

SYMPTOMS

- The most important remedy for warts, this is an appropriate choice most times.
- Particularly useful for large warts and ones that have grown quickly, warts on the face or nose or genital warts.

INDICATED REMEDY

Thuja

In addition to being taken by mouth, the mother tincture is also available as an extremely useful lotion which can be applied daily to the warts, often with good result.

Symptoms

- Here, the warts are hard and like horn.
- It may be especially useful for warts on the soles of the feet (veruccas).

Indicated Remedy

Antimonium Crudum

Symptoms

- The characteristic here is warts on the fingertips and especially at the nail edges, or even growing under the nails.

INDICATED REMEDY

Causticum

SYMPTOMS

- Warts are moist, itchy and bleed easily.
- They are sensitive and painful to touch.

INDICATED REMEDY

Nitric Acid

Intestinal, Bowel & Bladder Problems

IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME

In many ways, this troubling and sometimes embarrassing condition is poorly understood. The diagnosis of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is only arrived at by your doctor after considering alternatives such as inflammatory bowel disease which may need full investigation and so it is important to have had these excluded before trying to seek relief from symptoms in other ways.

Remember to consult your doctor for changes in bowel habit including blood loss, mucus, or weight loss or change in appetite.

Symptoms of IBS may include excessive wind, abdomen swelling up, gurgling, having to rush to the toilet and maybe cramps preceding a bowel movement. There may be diarrhoea or constipation. Appetite is usually not affected, although some foods may make the symptoms worse. Conventional treatments include peppermint oil and anti-spasmodics (which relax the bowel-wall muscle).

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Homeopathically, a few choices of remedy may help with local symptoms. A full consultation and constitutional-type prescribing seems to make most progress in this condition.

Symptoms

- Spasm-like, colicky pains which come on very suddenly and are extremely severe.
- The person may actually cry out with the waves of pain in the abdomen, which cause them to double up to try and get some relief.
- Hard pressure helps and there is urging for opening the bowel, with passage of wind which helps too.
- Another useful tip for this remedy is if the symptoms come on with anger or frustration.

Indicated Remedy

Colocynth

Symptoms

- Here, cramping is violent with belching, but is not relieved by passing wind.
- Bending double and pressing help, but best of all is heat, so sufferers will lie curled up with a hot-water bottle pressed to their abdomen.

Indicated Remedy

Magnesia Phosphorica

A remedy particularly helpful for pain.

Symptoms

- Feelings of anxiety and anticipation are particularly felt in the stomach and bowel.
- Pain above the navel with a lot of wind, which leads to a bloated feeling, relieved by noisily belching (often with relish!).
- People who do well with this remedy are often hot-blooded and hurried.
- They desire sweets and tasty things, even though the sweets may not agree, causing green diarrhoea.

Indicated Remedy

Argentum Nitricum

Symptoms

- Sufferers feel blown up and distended and better for passing lots of wind, up and down.
- There may be a desire for indigestible things such as puddings and a craving for coffee, salt, sweets and sour foods.
- Heartburn, especially at night.
- In extreme cases, sufferers may be very unwell, with coldness, exhaustion

and inability to concentrate.

Indicated Remedy

Carbo Vegetabilis

This is a major remedy for flatulence.

Symptoms

- Bloating may develop over the day, peaking between 4 and 8 pm.
- There is a need to loosen the clothes and often pain in the abdomen, especially under the ribs on the right.
- Craving for sweet things but sufferers feel full even after small amounts of food.
- Coldness aggravates, but warm drinks bring some relief.

Indicated Remedy

Lycopodium

Helps with bloating as described above.

Symptoms

- There is a lot of rumbling in the tummy, which is distended.
- Eating anything causes a sudden need to go to the toilet.

Indicated Remedy

Aloes

CONSTIPATION

This can be a very distressing problem in many situations. The difficulty in opening the bowel can come from many different causes and is a common occasional experience of most people. The remedies here can help in particular situations.

Symptoms

- Despite an absolutely loaded bowel, there is no urge to go at all.
- Great straining to pass anything.
- Dryness of the stool and the body in general.
- It is perhaps particularly useful in older people and is associated with slowness of all bodily processes, including mental processes.

Indicated Remedy

Alumina

Symptoms

- People who respond to this remedy are usually chilly, poorly-toned, sweaty and often overweight.
- They feel better for being constipated, so do not feel so well after use of laxatives.

Indicated Remedy

Calcarea Carbonica

Symptoms

- Plenty of urge but no result except perhaps a painful bowel or rectal spasm.
- They like tasty, rich food, coffee and alcohol, but they can be upset by them, especially in the stomach or lower bowel.
- They may well be chilly and fussy, with all the high-pressure characteristics of the self-pressurising, high-achieving ‘A-type’ personality.

Indicated Remedy

Nux Vomica

Symptoms

- Total inactivity or even obstruction of the bowel – a paralysis without even any straining or attempt to go.
- Frequently a consequence of taking prescribed medicines, especially some painkillers which have to be used a lot.
- A common problem in the elderly.

Indicated Remedy

Opium (homeopathic)

Symptoms

- The stool comes out in small, hard lumps, with much urging and straining.
- The stool can get so far out and then frustratingly slip back in.
- The abdominal muscles can be sore from so much pushing.
- Often useful in chilly, timid people.

Indicated Remedy

Silica

Symptoms

- Sweets are strongly desired, but they make things worse.
- Symptoms may come on while travelling.
- Lycopodium is also useful in cases of peptic ulcer with a very large amount of wind and bloating.

Indicated Remedy

Lycopodium

This remedy has a very broad picture, but has a particular relationship to the bowel.

DIARRHOEA

This happens to most people at some time and is often due to mild food poisoning by bacteria or viruses – especially when travelling abroad. The body can usually overcome the problem reasonably quickly, but homeopathy can speed things up. Diarrhoea can also be a symptom of worry, anxiety or irritable bowel, but as usual in homeopathy, the actual symptoms are the important thing to look at rather than the diagnosis. Rehydration is important. Children and the elderly may dehydrate quickly and require specialist treatment.

Symptoms

- Perhaps the first remedy to think of in food poisoning, especially if the diarrhoea is associated with vomiting.
- If the diarrhoea appears to stem from anxiety, or after eating ice-cream or fruit, this remedy can be helpful.
- There may well be thirst for warm drinks.
- Symptoms are often accompanied by a deep chilliness generally.

Indicated Remedy

Arsenicum Album

Symptoms

- The sufferer may be quite ill and pale, with dark rings under the eyes.
- Rumbling and gurgling in the bowel comes before the diarrhoea, which is bad-smelling, watery, green and gushes in large amounts.
- There may be wind, too, with spluttering of the stool.
- It tends to be more prominent at night, but at least it is usually painless.

Indicated Remedy

Podophyllum

Symptoms

- People who might benefit from this are often listless, lethargic and disinterested in the world around them.
- The diarrhoea is painless and odourless and can happen involuntarily.
- Diarrhoea of itself doesn't usually make sufferers feel unwell.
- Causes include fruit, over-eating and also fright and grief.

Indicated Remedy

Phosphoric Acid

Symptoms

- A build-up of gas in the bowel, with increasingly painful distension of the abdomen.
- The blown-up feeling is finally relieved by passing a lot of wind, but there is an insecure feeling at the lower end of the bowel, so the sufferer is not sure if it will be wind or stool that comes out.
- They may have urges to run to the bathroom quickly to relieve the pain safely.
- The stool can be of any kind, but will often have mucus with it.

Indicated Remedy

Aloes

SYMPTOMS

- Mainly useful in cases of long-standing diarrhoea – it goes on and on.
- Often it will drive the sufferer out of bed in the early morning and be green, spluttery and actually very bulky.
- It is made worse by damp weather and also by eating vegetables.

INDICATED REMEDY

Natrum Sulphuricum

HAEMORRHOIDS

These distended veins around the margins of the very end of the lower bowel at the anus, can be extremely troublesome. They arise ultimately from weakness of the supporting tissue in this area, due to a constitutional predisposition or an increase in pressure needed to pass stool (e.g. in pregnancy) or a combination of both. They can be noticed as grape-like, soft, red/blue bulges through the anus every time the bowel is opened, but which otherwise cause no trouble, or there can be varying degrees of pain, discomfort (itch) and bleeding. Homeopathy can be used to ease some of the symptoms, although it may be necessary to consult a surgeon if symptoms become too annoying. It should be emphasised that any bleeding from the bowel must be reported to a doctor and may well need further investigation.

Symptoms

- Appropriate for many cases and a good first start.
- There is a feeling of a small stick in the rectum all the time.
- Stools are dry, hard and painful to pass.

Indicated Remedy

Aesculus

Symptoms

- Sufferers may be rather constipated people who sit still a lot, perhaps working all day at a desk.
- Can be fussy and irritable – you may recognise the overworked businessman, who takes out his frustrations on his staff.

Indicated Remedy

Nux Vomica

Symptoms

- Another commonly indicated remedy, it has a particular action on the venous system in general and so is especially useful when other veins are affected – say, varicose veins in the legs.
- Constant sore feeling and passage of a lot of dark blood.
- The haemorrhoids will often protrude.

Indicated Remedy

Hammamelis

Symptoms

- Piles are large, blue and painful.
- Cold applications help the discomfort and sufferers might seek out a cold seat.
- There is a feeling of uncertainty about the anus and they may not know if they are going to pass stool or just wind.

Indicated Remedy

Aloes

Another major remedy to consider.

Symptoms

- Piles tend to bleed.
- The burning discomfort is oddly made worse by washing and especially by the warmth of the bed at night.

Indicated Remedy

Sulphur

Symptoms

- Constipation with a lot of bleeding from the piles.

- There is a feeling of congestion in the rectum and the pelvis.
- This remedy is particularly useful in piles arising in pregnancy

INDICATED REMEDY

Collinsonia

CYSTITIS & IRRITABLE BLADDER

Symptoms of bladder infection or cystitis requires a check of a urine sample for culture, to see if bacteria are present and which antibiotics they may be sensitive to for treatment if other methods are not successful. Sometimes there may be soreness passing urine when the sample is free of infection (irritable bladder or urethral syndrome). These remedies may be useful while awaiting a test result and may save the need for antibiotic (even if the urine test shows that there was some infection present).

Remember other measures, like keeping up a high fluid intake and drinking cranberry juice.

SYMPTOMS

- Pain at the end of passing urine with a feeling of urgency (‘must go’), but

only a small amount passes.

- There may be a greater urine flow if they stand rather than sit.
- Generally feeling worse from movement such as walking or going upstairs.
- There may be a particular urge to go before the menstrual period.

Indicated Remedy

Sarsaparilla

Perhaps the first remedy to try in uncomplicated cystitis.

Symptoms

- Classically for ‘honeymoon cystitis’, that is cystitis symptoms after sexual intercourse.
- Otherwise there is the strange sensation that a drop of urine is constantly running along the urethra.
- Pain after urination and a burning in the urethra whilst passing urine.

Indicated Remedy

Staphysagria

Symptoms

- With cystitis, sufferers are very sensitive to the cold and there may be involuntary leakage of urine, especially with stresses like coughing, sneezing or walking.
- There may be shooting pains in the rectum when trying to pass urine.

Indicated Remedy

Causticum

A useful remedy for the difficulty passing urine which can happen after childbirth.

Symptoms

- Awful raw, burning pain in bladder and urethra throughout passing urine.
- The urine passes drop by painful drop and the sufferer may be frantic with it.

Indicated Remedy

Cantharis

Symptoms

- There is a constant need to pass small amounts of urine; they go little and often.

- Relief from heat or warm bathing; passing urine in the bath helps.

INDICATED REMEDY

Nux Vomica

Gynaecological Problems

MENSTRUAL PERIODS

Period problems can vary through a lifetime. There may be changes at times of stress or after childbirth. Many ways have been tried to relieve the distressing symptoms, such as the oral contraceptive, eating regularly, evening primrose oil and mineral or vitamin supplements, but none are always effective. Period symptoms are often very responsive to homeopathy. It may take two or three cycles to appreciate any benefit and severe mood swings or pain may require professional help or another intervention, like acupuncture.

Severe pain, bleeding between periods, pain during sexual intercourse, extreme mood swings or heavy blood loss, should all lead you to seek advice from your GP or gynaecologist.

Symptoms & Other Features

MOOD CHANGES AND 'PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME' (PMS): there may be a heightening or accentuation of your character or a complete change, irritability ('crabbit'), irrational, indifference to housework, indifference to children, explosive anger, weepiness, desire to be cared for (better for consolation), jealousy, anxiety and fretting.

PHYSICAL CHANGES: sore breasts, distended abdomen, aching legs, backache, headaches, cramps and bowel changes like constipation or diarrhoea.

TIMING WITH PERIOD: symptoms worse before/during/after, go away when period starts.

NATURE OF BLOOD LOSS: light, dark, with or without clots or variable.

OTHER FEATURES TO NOTE: Food cravings, sensitivity to music, desire for solitude.

With pre-menstrual symptoms, it is sometimes helpful to take the remedy about the time of ovulation or two weeks or so before the period is due and continue daily until the period starts. Some women feel better with just three doses of remedy each month after the period.

Remedies That May Be Helpful

If you know your constitutional-type remedy from previously consulting a practitioner, this may be what you need as a monthly boost if symptoms keep recurring.

SYMPTOMS

- The sufferer is very intense or argumentative before the period, or even jealous or vindictive – she regrets this later.
- Often worse on waking.
- May be clumsy, dropping things.
- Usually hot and intolerant of constrictive clothing around the waist or neck, feeling bloated, with swollen legs and hands.
- Generally feels better emotionally and physically as soon as the period starts.

- The flow may be dark, heavy and clotted.

Indicated Remedy

Lachesis

Symptoms

- Symptoms and mood are changeable; can be extremely contrary.
- The sufferer is emotional, tearful and with heightened sensitivity, so that she may be hurt easily.
- May feel low and sad before periods, needing a lot of reassurance, liking company and sympathy.
- Intolerant of closed, stuffy rooms and better for the open air and gentle exercise.
- The breasts may be swollen and the periods may be irregular and painful.
- There may be headache toward the end of the period.

Indicated Remedy

Pulsatilla

Symptoms

- Mood changes can be marked by irritability and sadness, often profound.
- The sufferer can feel generally negative about life and tends to shun company, preferring to be alone.
- Fluid retention with swollen, sore breasts and a bloated abdomen.
- Skin may be greasy and cold sores may come out.

Indicated Remedy

Natrum Muriaticum

Symptoms

- Particularly helpful for cramping and violent pain.
- Bending double and pressing help, but best of all is heat, so sufferers will lie curled up with a hot water bottle pressed to their tummy.

Indicated Remedy

Magnesium Phosphoricum

Symptoms

- Can be irritable, weepy and depressed before, during and after the period.

- She tends to be chilly, exhausted and overwhelmed by everything.
- Her family annoy her and she wants to be left alone, especially around a tea- time energy-slump.
- There may be low-back pain and a characteristic ‘bearing down’ sensation in the pelvis, ‘as if the womb would fall out’ which is better for crossing the legs.
- Paradoxically, she can brighten up with vigorous exercise, especially dancing.

Indicated Remedy

Sepia

Symptoms

- Characteristically, there is a large amount of bright, fresh blood.

Indicated Remedy

Phosphorus

Helps those who are exhausted by periods.

Symptoms

- Suitable for spasm-like, colicky pains which come on in waves very suddenly and are extremely severe.
- She may actually cry out with the pain, which makes her double up to try and get some relief. Hard pressure helps.
- There may be anger or frustration.

Indicated Remedy

Colocynth

Symptoms

- There is a feeling of congestion in the pelvis, with pain before the flow of the period starts, coming on very suddenly.
- There is the feeling that all the organs inside are about to fall out, but this is strangely eased by standing and worse for lying down.
- The vagina is dry and the period heavy.

Indicated Remedy

Belladonna

Symptoms

- Spasmodic, severe pains, especially on the first day of the period.
- The pains are felt in other places, for example shooting to the feet.
- She tends to be chilly and may have joint pains, especially of the joints of the hands with the period.

INDICATED REMEDY

Caulophyllum

Menopause

Many women find themselves intolerant of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT), or wish an alternative or something to take in addition, as sometimes HRT does not alleviate all the symptoms.

Symptoms Around The Menopause

MOOD CHANGE: Irritability, weepiness, unpredictable mood swings, indifference to family, loss of sexual libido, low energy/drive, low mood.

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PHYSICAL CHANGES: Hot flushing, sweating, vaginal dryness, headaches, clumsiness, lack of control over bladder (e.g. leaking with coughing, etc.); poor memory and concentration.

Homeopathy may improve symptom-control and well-being at this important time of life-change, which is often emotionally as well as physically turbulent. Relationships may reach crisis, children may be approaching sexual maturity and there can be career changes. Diet and exercise are very important and appropriate advice should be sought. Homeopathically, menopause is a state affecting most systems of the body, with deep emotional consequences and so constitutional treatment is often very helpful.

SYMPTOMS

- Chilly and rather down in mood.
- No interest in anything, especially sex and things she formerly loved.
- If childbirth was difficult there can be womb prolapse symptoms or stress incontinence.
- Flushes, sweats and a constant heavy feeling in the lower abdomen, as if everything inside was trying to come out, along with low back pain.
- Being left alone feels best, as the slightest annoyance causes irritation.
- There is a marked improvement with strong activities such as running or particularly dancing.

Indicated Remedy

Sepia

This is probably the most frequently used remedy in the menopause.

Symptoms

- Particularly helpful for physical symptoms, such as flushes of heat, sweating (especially in the evening and on exercising), weakness, shakiness inside and a sense of hurriedness.
- Tend to bruise easily.

Indicated Remedy

Sulphuric Acid

Symptoms

- Woman who may be helped by this remedy are hot: they cannot stand heat and are better for cool air. They may be talkative, rather suspicious and jealous, with a feeling of activity about them.
- Violent flushes of heat to the face; tight clothes, especially around the neck, are unbearable.
- Blown-up sensation, feeling swollen in the face, neck, abdomen and limbs, with a slightly bluish tinge.
- Alcohol may aggravate symptoms.

Indicated Remedy

Lachesis

Symptoms

- Hot, hurried, restless person who is trying to multi-task and take on a lot.
- They do not like sympathy, prefer to be occupied and in cool, fresh air.

Indicated Remedy

LiliumTigrinum

Symptoms

- Unassertive; gentle and tearful, changeability of mood and symptoms.
- They like company and sympathy.

- They may seem puffy, as if with fluid retention.
- They prefer gentle exercise and being outdoors and are worse for heat and for tight clothes.

INDICATED REMEDY

Pulsatilla

SYMPTOMS

- Emotional disturbances; may help in grief or redundancy, with the ‘numbness’ in different areas of the body.
- The sensation of a lump in the throat and unpredictable flushings.
- Depression, with a tendency to sigh.

INDICATED REMEDY

Ignatia

Symptoms

- Used for attacks of severe perspiration which leave the sufferer exhausted. May be increased saliva during attacks.

Indicated Remedy

Jaborandi

Symptoms

- Hot flushes of the head and face with redness and facial sweating.

- Awareness of a rapid, racing heartbeat (palpitations).

INDICATED REMEDY

Glonoinum

SYMPTOMS

- Very sudden onset of flushing to the head and face with redness and marked sweating of the face; attacks pass quickly.

INDICATED REMEDY

Belladonna

Pregnancy, Childbirth & Breastfeeding

Homeopathy can offer relief for some of the more upsetting symptoms in

pregnancy, safely with no risk of side-effects to baby or mother. All of the other sections can be used, whether the problem is constipation, bladder irritation or haemorrhoids.

MORNING SICKNESS

Symptoms

- Useful if diarrhoea accompanies nausea.
- Sufferers tend to be chilly, fastidious and

Indicated Remedy

Arsenicum Album

Symptoms

- Constant nausea, unrelieved by vomiting.
- Irritable and worse for the heat; better for rest and for the open air.

Indicated Remedy

Ipecacuanha

Symptoms

- Sickness in the morning with retching but little vomiting.
- Chilly and constipated.

Indicated Remedy

Nux Vomica

Symptoms

- Nausea and vomiting worse in evening.
- Desires ice-cold water, but vomits it back.

Indicated Remedy

Phosphorus

Symptoms

- Morning sickness, with stomach cramps.
- Particularly bad on smelling fatty food.
- Dependent, much helped by company.

Indicated Remedy

Pulsatilla

Symptoms

- Especially helpful when there is severe heart-burn or acid reflux from the

stomach.

INDICATED REMEDY

Robinia

SYMPTOMS

- Can’t bear the sight or smell of food, but empty sensation in the stomach is made better by eating a little.
- Sour and acid foods are desired.
- Irritable and liable to refuse any consolation or help offered.

INDICATED REMEDY

Sepia

AROUND THE BIRTH

The following three treatments are the most important when getting things ready for the birth. Many other remedies could be suggested, but simplicity is vital at this stage.

Remedy

Arnica

This helps you cope with the potentially traumatic effects of the birth, both physically and emotionally. Start taking Arnica in the week before the expected date of delivery and continue for at least a week afterwards – longer if there is a lot of bruising. If your baby comes sooner than expected, begin the Arnica as soon as possible.

You can take a preparation which combines Arnica, Hypericum and Calendula. This is particularly useful if the birth is a traumatic or forceps delivery or a caesarean section.

Remedy

Caulophyllum

If labour is lasting a long time, with poor uterine contractions or failure to dilate, this remedy has a reputation for getting things going again and may help avoid the need for further medical intervention to ensure a safe delivery.

Remedy

Hypercal Lotion

This is very soothing and aids healing of any grazes to the perineum or cuts made at episiotomy. It can be added to warm water to bathe the area.

BREAST FEEDING

Avoid putting creams or ointments on the nipples if possible, or wash it off before feeding, because of the possibility of sensitising the baby to the constituents of the cream-base.

SORE NIPPLES

Calendula or Hypercal cream can help ease sore or cracked nipples, but wash it off before feeding.

SYMPTOMS

- Tender, inflamed nipples, which are too sore to touch and make the mother very irritable and intolerant, to the extent that she may stop feeding the baby herself.

INDICATED REMEDY

Chamomilla

Symptoms

- Sore, cracked nipples with splinter-like pains when the baby suckles.

Indicated Remedy

Nitric Acid

MASTITIS

If you get a sore lump in the breast and/or redness, seek medical help promptly, but keep feeding, as the breast needs to empty and the milk will not be at all harmful to baby. It can be worth trying homeopathy, and you may avoid the need for an antibiotic.

Symptoms

- Suddenly red, hot, throbbing and sore.
- Red streaks radiate from the nipple.
- Aggravated by touch and by lying down.
- There can be fever.

Indicated Remedy

Belladonna

Symptoms

- Breasts are hot and hard with sore lumps.
- Pain is worse for movement and better for pressure and lying on the painful side.

Indicated Remedy

Bryonia

Symptoms

- Breasts are hard and sore, with abscesses and a bluish discolouration.
- There may be ulcers around the nipples and cracks in them.

Indicated Remedy

Phytolacca

SYMPTOMS

- Exquisitely sensitive, well-defined area in the breast is involved with an abscess.
- Cannot bear any touch or cold draught on the breast.

INDICATED REMEDY

Hepar Sulph

Infant Colic & Teething

COLIC

A very common problem in babies and one which is often immediately solved by homeopathy, much to the relief of many a parent!

SYMPTOMS

- The main remedy and the first one to try.
- Pain comes in waves and is helped by firm pressure; e.g. holding the baby

facedown, with a hand under the tummy.

- Passing wind also improves matters.

Indicated Remedy

Colocynth

Symptoms

- An angry baby with a blown-up tummy.
- Passing wind makes little difference, but warmth does help.
- Has to be carried.

Indicated Remedy

Chamomilla

Symptoms

- The baby vomits and rejects its milk, crying piteously.
- Cries often stop when baby is picked up.

Indicated Remedy

Pulsatilla

TEETHING

Homeopathy can ease this transition, too.

Symptoms

- In great pain with tender, inflamed gums.
- Extremely irritable and cross, especially at night.
- Made worse by a warm room and better for cold (drinks and air).
- Has to be carried all the time.

Indicated Remedy

Chamomilla

Chamomilla is the main teething remedy.

Symptoms

- Useful if the onset of teething is rather delayed compared to average.

Indicated Remedy

Calcarea Carbonica

Symptoms

- This is the first remedy in general for pain caused by damaged nerves and can make a useful combination with the other remedies.

Indicated Remedy

Hypericum

Vaccination & Immunisation

This is a controversial topic, with many parents anxious about possible side effects of immunisation, which must be balanced against the potential risk of serious illness affecting a wide population.

Although it is a personal decision and choice, the wider picture and the concept of ‘herd immunity’ (protecting the weaker, often less affluent members in a community by virtue of a high vaccination rate) should not be forgotten.

There is no homeopathic alternative to vaccination. An acute infection cannot be prevented homeopathically, though healing may be well- supported with expert

homeopathic care, but this is not at all the same thing. Of course, not everyone has access to homeopathy, nor indeed wishes it.

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The Faculty of Homeopathy produces a helpful leaflet with its own guidance, which at present is to follow the current vaccination schedules.

Where homeopathy can help is in reducing any potential side effects of immunisation. Self-help includes taking the remedy Thuja, in a 6C or 30C potency, a dose before and a couple of doses in the day or two after the injection. Other treatments, requiring the help of an expert homeopathic practitioner, include a constitutional prescription and possibly homeopathic preparations of the vaccines (to reduce side effects, not as preventatives themselves).

Surgery

Taking homeopathy before and after surgical procedures can help reduce pain, bruising and swelling and aid recovery. Minor and major operations can be helped, e.g. wisdom-tooth extraction and other dental operations, hysterectomy and varicose-vein stripping. It can also help with some specific problems afterwards, such as pain or retention of urine.

Remedy

Arnica, Calendula & Hypericum

This classic triad of remedies is very helpful in aiding healing and reducing pain in many circumstances. They can be mixed together and taken three times daily for the three or so days before the operation and the week afterwards.

Remedy

Symphytum

The main remedy to help heal bone fractures and so useful in operations involving bone trauma, such as wisdom teeth extractions or joint replacements. Just add it in to the triad above.

Remedy

Bellis Perennis

Often more effective than Arnica in reducing bruising and aiding healing after gynaecological operations, such as hysterectomy or ovarian cyst removal.

Remedy

Hypericum

The main remedy for nerve pain and so very useful in reducing the need for painkillers after the operation.

Remedy

Staphysagria

This has a reputation for helping healing of surgical wounds and particularly after operations on the genital or urinary tracts, for example when there is soreness after a urinary catheter has had to be used.

Remedy

Causticum

This is really helpful for people who are unable to pass urine after an operation, which is an especial problem following gynaecological surgery (and childbirth too).

Emotional & Physical Stress, Including Grief

Homeopathy can be a support at times of emotional as well as physical shock. It can be thought of after accidents, sports injuries, unexpected events (even joyful ones), distressing situations (such as an argument or unpleasant confrontation), loss of a job or death of a friend or relative. However, do not defer expert help if needed.

REMEDY

Arnica

The major trauma remedy not only helps with physical injury, but also with emotional ‘bruising’ too and is a good first step to start the healing.

REMEDY

Ignatia

An extremely useful remedy for acute grief. It helps people get through the awfulness of the first shock of loss and deal with what has to be done, say after a death. There may be a lump in the throat and a feeling of a heavy weight in the chest.

REMEDY

Aconite

Here, fright and fear predominate. It may usefully complement Ignatia in grief, but it also has a place in treating any problem which arose after a shock or fright, even if it began many years ago.

REMEDY

Gelsemium

The picture here is one of ‘shaking with fright’ - not uncommon before performances or exams. Gelsemium is best known for helping stage fright but it can also be useful after the event.

REMEDY

Natrum Muriaticum

This remedy can powerfully help release feelings held in check for a long time. Grieving appropriately is not always easy in our ‘don’t show your feelings’, ‘stiff upper lip’ society, but can be vital for regaining full health and balance and readjusting to life without the loved one. It is best to leave such deep work until there is the help and support of a practitioner, but this remedy may help in the immediate situation too in some individuals.

PRE-PERFORMANCE NERVES

This includes such things as exams, driving test, giving talks in public, going to the dentist or doctor or family occasions like weddings.

SYMPTOMS

- Intense fear and dread.
- A tendency to panic attacks.

INDICATED REMEDY

Aconite

Symptoms

- Feeling lousy, with weakness and possibly headache.
- Trembling in anticipation, so suitable for stage fright.
- They may need to pass urine frequently.

Indicated Remedy

Gelsemium

Symptoms

- The best remedy for mind-blankness in exams.

INDICATED REMEDY

Anacardium

SYMPTOMS

- Pre- but not during- performance nerves.

INDICATED REMEDY

Lycopodium

Travel-Related Stress

ANXIETY ABOUT TRAVELLING

All of these remedies are useful and should be taken several times on the day before the journey and whilst travelling.

REMEDY

Argentum Nitricum

Especially when the anxiety is felt in the tummy, with sickness, diarrhoea or ‘butterflies’. It seems especially helpful for those who find the thought of flying a particular torment.

REMEDY

Aconite

If there is real panic and fear, with over breathing, sweating and palpitations.

REMEDY

Ignatia

If the anxiety makes you restless and excitable one moment and gloomy and withdrawn the next.

REMEDY

Gelsemium

If the anxiety makes you feel weak and trembly.

REMEDY

Coffea cruda

For children who are over-excited about the prospect of travelling.

JET LAG

REMEDY

Arnica

As prevention or treatment, even after the journey. Take it several times daily for a few days before the flight and during it. People flying often have a bruised-all-over feeling and cannot get comfortable.

Remedy

Cocculus

For the effects of lack of sleep; loss of appetite.

TRAVEL SICKNESS

Different remedies may be particularly suited to different modes of travel (in brackets).

Symptoms

- Feeling dizzy and a need to lie down.
- Headache with nausea and feeling weak all over.
- The sight or thought of food is unbearable.
- Warmth helps.

Indicated Remedy

Cocculus (air, car)

Symptoms

- Dizziness with vomiting, often made worse by noise.
- The empty feeling is relieved by eating.
- All symptoms are better for closing the eyes.

Indicated Remedy

Petroleum (car, train)

Symptoms

- Sufferers are cold, pale, exhausted and sweaty.
- Constant nausea and a headache like a band around the head.
- Worsened by the smell of cigarettes.

Indicated Remedy

Tabacum (sea)

Symptoms

- Sea-sickness which is better for cold.

- The motion downwards is the most distressing part of the journeying.

INDICATED REMEDY

Sanicula (sea)

SYMPTOMS

- Any motion, up or down, is distressing.

INDICATED REMEDY

Borax (air)

GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS

Aggravation a temporary worsening of the symptoms sometimes seen after taking the remedy. Usually followed by improvement

Constitution all the elements which characterise an individual

Constitutional the homeopathic treatment which most matches the individual's Remedy constitution (see p. 34)

Direction of Cure the principle that healing and improvement take place at the central core of a person first and moves in a systematic way 'outwards' to the physical symptoms

Holistic referring to an approach which values and addresses all a person's aspects: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual

Isopathy the use of homeopathic potencies of allergy- causing substances such as pollens to treat an allergic condition

Materia Medica the knowledge of remedies used in homeopathic treatment, listed in detail in books

Mother Tincture the remedy at its most concentrated after extraction. Used for subsequent dilutions

Polychrest a remedy acting on a vast array of symptoms and therefore, useful for a wide range of problems

Potency the 'strength' of a remedy, i.e. the number of times it has gone through the dilution/shaking process used in preparation (see pp. 30-32). The higher the potency, the more dilute is the remedy

Proving the process of discovering the effects of a substance on the human body. Healthy volunteers take doses of the substance in potency and accurately record the symptoms produced

Remedy the substance in homeopathic potency in the form in which it is used to

treat conditions homeopathically, e.g. tablets, crystals or granules

Repertory a listing of symptoms in minute detail, with remedies which have caused the symptoms and can therefore be used to treat them

Simillimum the one remedy that can be chosen as best fitting the symptoms presented

Vital Force term used by Hahnemann to describe the innate power for self-healing within human beings

USEFUL ADDRESSES

PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Faculty of Homeopathy

15 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1R 0AA (Tel: 0207566 7810; Fax: 020 7566 7815)
Website: www.trusthomeopathy.org/faculty
The organisation which registers Medically Qualified Practitioners.

The British Homeopathic Association

15 Clerkenwell Close, London EClR 0AA (Tel: 020 7566 7800; Fax: 020 7566 7815)
Website: www.trusthomeopathy.org
A charity supporting Medical Homeopathy and working closely with the Faculty. It is the place to contact for information on NHS clinics running in your area. It also publishes the magazine *Health and Homeopathy*, a useful source of information.

Society of Homeopaths

4a Artizan Road, Northampton NN1 4HU (Tel: 01604 621400; Fax: 01604 22622)
The largest organisation registering professional Homeopaths.

NHS HOSPITALS

Bristol Homeopathic Hospital

Cotham Hill, Bristol BS6 6JU (Tel: 01179 731231)

Department of Homeopathic Medicine

The Old Swan Health Centre, Crystal Close, St Oswald's Street, Liverpool L13 2GA (Tel: 0151 285 3707)

Glasgow Homeopathic Hospital
1053 Great Western Road, Glasgow *G12* 0XQ (Tel: 0141 211 1600)

Royal London Homeopathic Hospital
60 Great Ormond Street, London WC1N 3HR (Tel: 020 7837 8833)

Tunbridge Wells Homeopathic Hospital
Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TNI 1JU (Tel: 01892 542977)

HOMEOPATHIC PHARMACIES

Ainsworth's Pharmacy
36 New Cavendish Street, London W1G 8UF (Tel: 020 7935 5330)

Freeman's Homeopathic Chemist
20 Main Street, Busby, Clarkston, Glasgow G76 8DU (Tel: 0141 644 1165)

Helios Homeopathic Pharmacy
97 Camden Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2QR (Tel: 01892 537254)

FURTHER READING

Everyday Homeopathy *Dr David Gemmell* Beaconsfield Publishers 1997

The Family Guide to Homeopathy *Dr Andrew Lockie* Hamish Hamilton 1990

A Woman's Guide to Homeopathy *Dr Andrew Lockie & Dr Nicki Geddes* Hamish Hamilton 1992

Health & Homeopathy Quarterly Magazine published by The British Homeopathic Association

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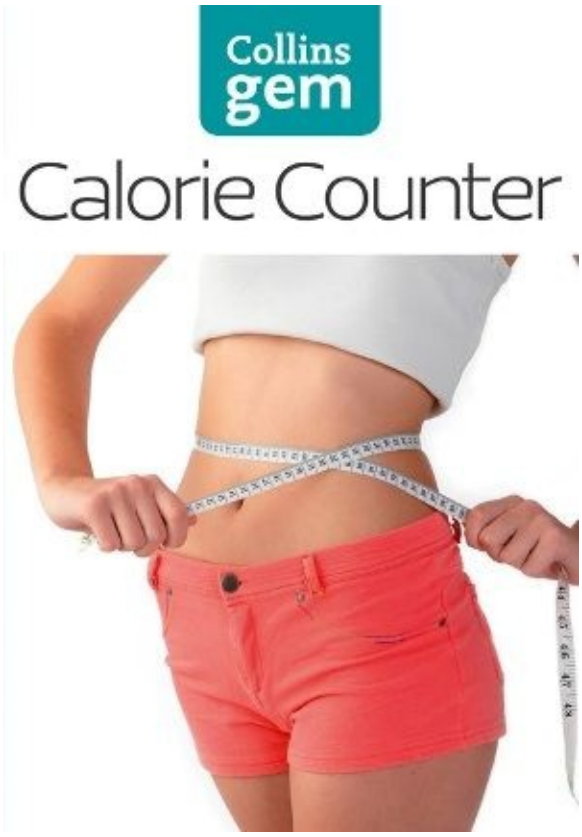

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